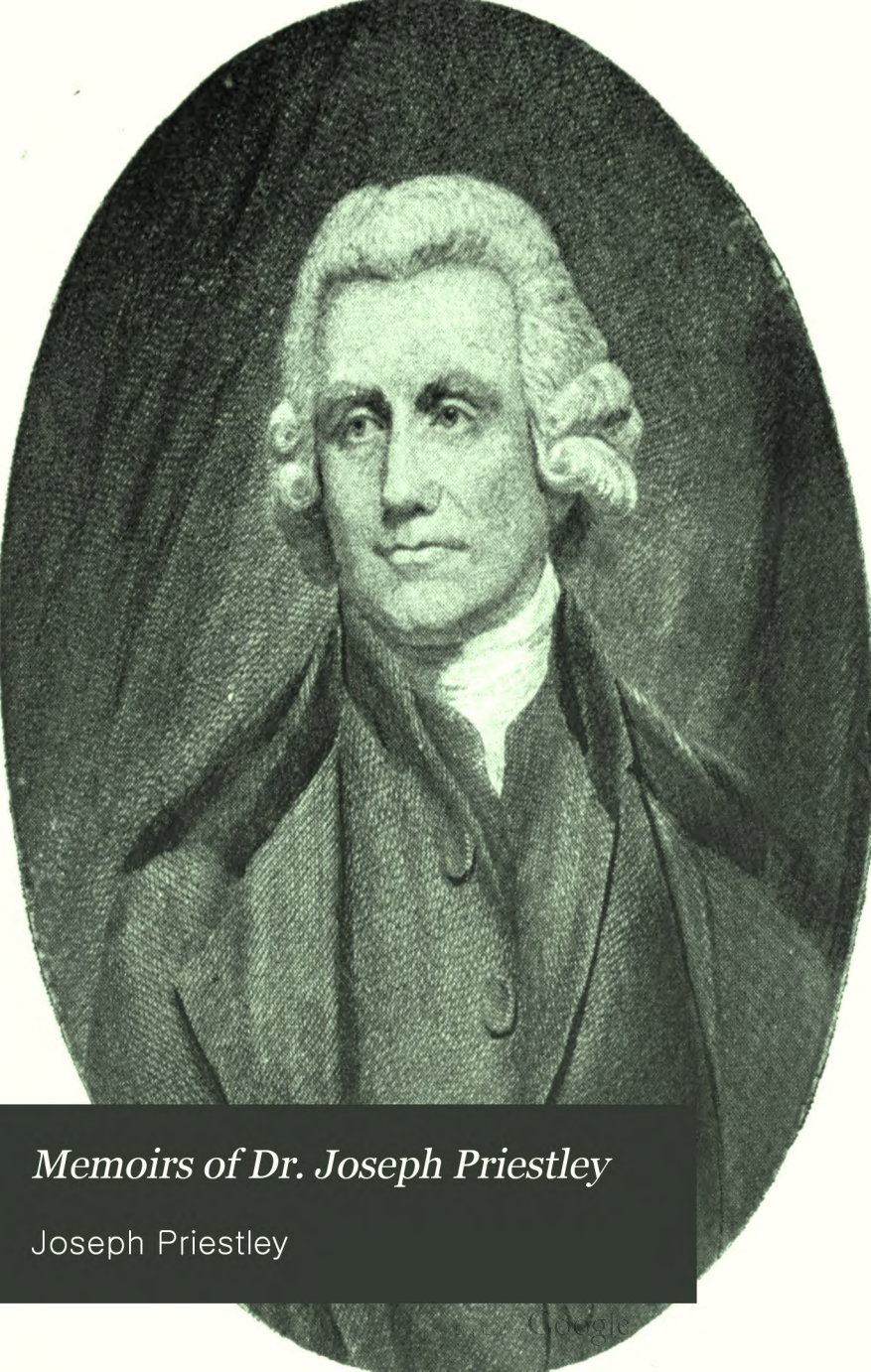
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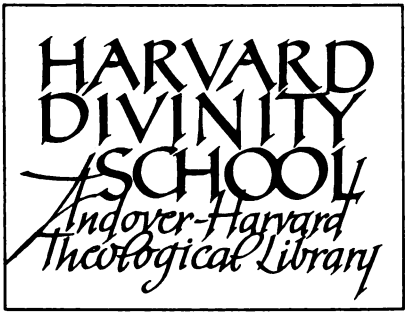




Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley

Joseph Priestley

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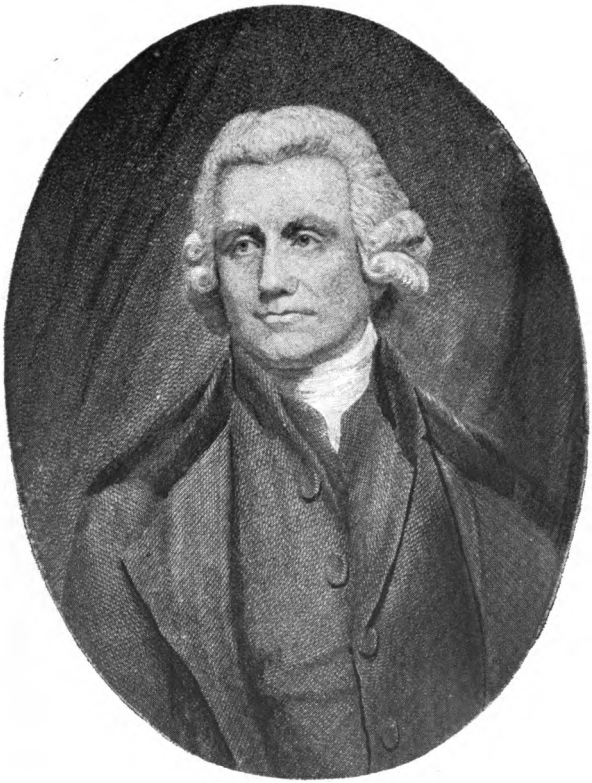


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CENTENARY EDITION.

MEMOIRS

OF

DR. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

(To the Year 1795.)

WITH A CONTINUATION TO THE TIME OF HIS DECEASE

BY HIS SON, JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

REPRINTED FROM THE EDITION OF 1809.

H. R. ALLENSON,
1 & 2 IVY LANE, LONDON, E.C.

1904.

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PREFACE.

The Centenary of the death of Dr. Priestley has suggested, and indeed rendered necessary, this reprint of his Autobiography. It is taken from the edition of 1809, and tells firstly his life story at Daventry, Needham Market, Nantwich, Warrington, Leeds, Calne and Birmingham, up to the year 1787, at which point he discontinued the account. This portion escaped the destruction of his papers during the Church and King Riots in 1791, a description of which is here given, by permission, from the *Letters of Catherine Hutton, 1891.*

At Northumberland Priestley continued his Autobiography up to 1795, and had intended to complete the narrative, but its conclusion was supplied by his son. With this second portion the Memoirs, therefore, comprise the whole seventy-one years from his birth to his decease.

It is hoped that the series of illustrations will be found of special value and interest to those who love Priestley or his friends, and like to look into his face.

FRANK K. FREESTON.

February 6th, 1904

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[The Foot Notes signed J.P. are by Priestley's Son (*vide* p. 87) and those signed T.C. are by Thomas Cooper (*vide* p. 110).]

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MEMOIRS

OF

DR. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

(1.) Having thought it right to leave behind me some account of my *friends* and *benefactors*, it is in a manner necessary that I also give some account of *myself;* and as the like has been done by many persons, and for reasons which posterity has approved, I make no further apology for following their example. If my writings in general have been useful to my contemporaries, I hope that this account of myself will not be without its use to those who may come after me, and especially in promoting virtue and piety, which, I hope I may say, it has been my care to practise myself, as it has been my business to inculcate them upon others.

(2.) My father, Jonas Priestley, was the youngest son of Joseph Priestley, a maker and dresser of woollen cloth. His first wife, my mother, was the only child of Joseph Swift, a farmer at Shafton, a village about six miles south-east of Wakefield. By this wife he had six children, four sons and two daughters. I, the oldest, was born on the thirteenth of March, old style, 1733, at Fieldhead, about six miles south-west of Leeds, in Yorkshire. My mother

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dying in 1740, my father married again in 1745, and by his second wife had three daughters.

(3.) My mother having children so fast, I was very soon committed to the care of her father, and with him I continued with little interruption till my mother's death.

(4.) It is but little that I can recollect of my mother. I remember, however, that she was careful to teach me the Assembly's Catechism, and to give me the best instructions the little time that I was at home. Once in particular, when I was playing with a pin, she asked me where I got it; and on telling her that I found it at my uncle's, who lived very near to my father, and where I had been playing with my cousins, she made me carry it back again—no doubt to impress my mind, as it could not fail to do, with a clear idea of the distinction of property, and of the importance of attending to it. She died in the hard winter of 1739, not long after being delivered of my youngest brother; and having dreamed a little before her death that she was in a delightful place, which she particularly described, and imagined to be heaven, the last words which she spake, as my aunt informed me, were, "Let me go to that fine place."

(5.) On the death of my mother I was taken home, my brothers taking my place, and was sent to school in the neighbourhood. But being without a mother, and my father encumbered with a large family, a sister of my father's, in the year 1742, relieved him of all care of me by taking me entirely to herself, and considering me as her child, having none of her own. From this time she was truly a parent to me, till her death in 1764.

(6.) My aunt was married to a Mr. Keighley, a man who had distinguished himself for his zeal for religion and for his public spirit. He was also a man of considerable property,

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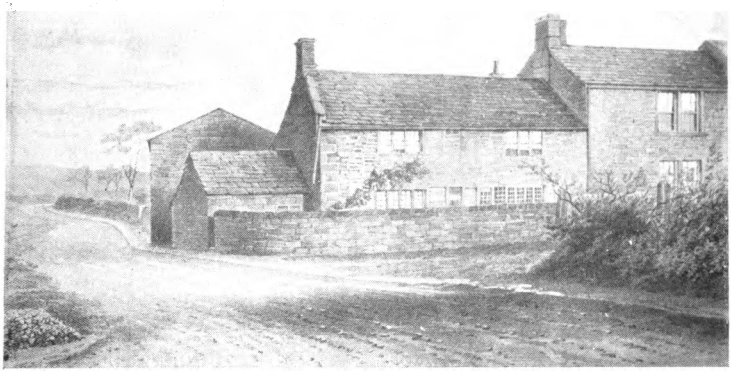


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Mr. Whitefield, a man who
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and dying soon after I went to them, left the greatest part of his fortune to my aunt for life, and much of it at her disposal after her death.

(7.) By this truly pious and excellent woman, who knew no other use of wealth, or of talents of any kind, than to do good, and who never spared herself for this purpose, I was sent to several schools in the neighbourhood, especially to a large free school, under the care of a clergyman, Mr. Hague, under whom, at the age of twelve or thirteen, I first began to make any progress in the Latin tongue, and acquired the elements of Greek. But about the same time that I began to learn Greek at this public school, I learned Hebrew on holidays of the Dissenting minister of the place, Mr. Kirkby; and upon the removal of Mr. Hague from the free school, Mr. Kirkby opening a school of his own, I was wholly under his care. With this instruction, I had acquired a pretty good knowledge of the learned languages at the age of sixteen. But from this time Mr. Kirkby's increasing infirmities obliged him to relinquish his school, and beginning to be of a weakly consumptive habit, so that it was not thought advisable to send me to any other place of education, I was left to conduct my studies as well as I could till I went to the academy at Daventry, in the year 1752.

(8.) From the time I discovered any fondness for books, my aunt entertained hopes of my being a minister, and I readily entered into her views. But my ill-health obliged me to turn my thoughts another way, and, with a view to trade, I learned the modern languages, French, Italian, and High Dutch, without a master; and in the first and last of them I translated and wrote letters for an uncle of mine who was a merchant, and who intended to put me into a counting-house in Lisbon. A house was actually engaged to

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receive me there, and everything was nearly ready for my undertaking the voyage; but getting better health, my former destination for the ministry was resumed, and I was sent to Daventry, to study under Mr. Ashworth, afterwards Dr. Ashworth.

(9.) Looking back, as I often do, upon this period of my life, I see the greatest reason to be thankful to God for the pious care of my parents and friends in giving me religious instruction. My mother was a woman of exemplary piety, and my father also had a strong sense of religion, praying with his family morning and evening, and carefully teaching his children and servants the Assembly's Catechism, which was all the system of which he had any knowledge. In the latter part of his life he became very fond of Mr. Whitfield's writings, and other works of a similar kind, having been brought up in the principles of Calvinism, and adopting them; but without ever giving much attention to matters of speculation, and entertaining no bigoted aversion to those who differed from him on the subject.

(10.) The same was the case with my excellent aunt; she was truly Calvinistic in principle, but was far from confining salvation to those who thought as she did on religious subjects. Being left in good circumstances, her home was the resort of all the Dissenting ministers in the neighbourhood without distinction, and those who were the most obnoxious on account of their heresy were almost as welcome to her, if she thought them honest and good men (which she was not unwilling to do), as any others.

(11.) The most heretical ministers in the neighbourhood were Mr. Graham, of Halifax, and Mr. Walker, of Leeds; but they were frequently my aunt's guests. With the former of these my intimacy grew with my years, but

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chiefly after I became a preacher. We kept up a correspondence to the last, thinking alike on most subjects. To him I dedicated my "Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit," and when he died he left me his manuscripts, his Polyglot Bible, and two hundred pounds. Besides being a rational Christian, he was an excellent classical scholar, and wrote Latin with great facility and elegance. He frequently wrote to me in that language.

(12.) Thus I was brought up with sentiments of piety, but without bigotry, and, having from my earliest years given much attention to the subject of religion, I was as much confirmed as I well could be in the principles of Calvinism, all the books that came in my way having that tendency.

(13.) The weakness of my constitution, which often led me to think that I should not be long-lived, contributed to give my mind a still more serious turn; and having read many books of *experiences*, and, in consequence, believing that a *new birth*, produced by the immediate agency of the Spirit of God, was necessary to salvation, and not being able to satisfy myself that I *had* experienced anything of the kind, I felt occasionally such distress of mind as it is not in my power to describe, and which I still look back upon with horror. Notwithstanding I had nothing very material to reproach myself with, I often concluded that God had forsaken me, and that mine was like the case of Francis Spira, to whom, as he imagined, repentance and salvation were denied. In that state of mind, I remember reading the account of the man in the iron cage, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," with the greatest perturbation.

(14.) I imagine that even these conflicts of mind were not without their use, as they led me to think habitually of God and a future state. And though my feelings were then, no

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doubt, too full of terror, what remained of them was a deep reverence for divine things, and in time a pleasing satisfaction which can never be effaced, and, I hope, was strengthened as I have advanced in life, and acquired more rational notions of religion. The remembrance, however, of what I sometimes felt in that state of ignorance and darkness gives me a peculiar sense of the value of rational principles of religion, and of which I can give but an imperfect description to others.

(15.) As *truth*, we cannot doubt, must have an advantage over *error*, we may conclude that the want of these peculiar feelings is compensated by something of greater value, which arises to others from always having seen things in a just and pleasing light; from having always considered the Supreme Being as a kind parent of all his offspring. This, however, not having been my case, I cannot be so good a judge of the effects of it. At all events, we ought always to inculcate just views of things, assuring ourselves that *proper feelings and right conduct* will be the consequence of them.

(16.) In the latter part of the interval between my leaving the grammar-school and going to the academy, which was something more than two years, I attended two days in the week upon Mr. Haggerstone, a Dissenting minister in the neighbourhood, who had been educated under Mr. Maclaurin. Of him I learned geometry, algebra, and various branches of mathematics, theoretical and practical. And at the same time I read, but with little assistance from him, "Gravesend's Elements of Natural Philosophy," "Watts's Logic," "Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding," &c., and made such a proficiency in other classes of learning that when I was admitted at the academy* (which was on Coward's founda-

* The academy at Daventry, removed thither from Northampton on the death of Dr. Doddridge in 1751.

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tion) I was excused all the studies of the first year, and a great part of those of the second.

(17.) In the same interval I spent the latter part of every week with Mr. Thomas, a Baptist minister, now of Bristol, but then of Gildersome, a village about four miles from Leeds, who had had no learned education. Him I instructed in Hebrew, and by that means made myself a considerable proficient in that language. At the same time I learned Chaldee and Syriac, and just began to read Arabic. Upon the whole, going to the academy later than is usual, and being thereby better furnished, I was qualified to appear there with greater advantage.

(18.) Before I went from home I was very desirous of being admitted a communicant in the congregation which I had always attended, and the old minister, as well as my aunt, were as desirous of it as myself, but the elders of the church, who had the government of it, refused me, because, when they interrogated me on the subject of the *sin of Adam*, I appeared not to be quite orthodox, not thinking that all the human race (supposing them not to have any sin of their own) were liable to the wrath of God and the pains of hell for ever, on account of that sin only; for such was the question that was put to me. Some time before, having then no doubt of the truth of the doctrine, I well remember being much distressed that I could not feel a proper repentance for the sin of Adam; taking it for granted that, without *this*, it could not be forgiven me. Mr. Haggerstone, above-mentioned, was a little more liberal than the members of the congregation in which I was brought up, being what is called a *Baxterian**;

* Richard Baxter, the Ejected minister, attempted a coalition between the doctrines of Calvin and Arminius.—T. C.

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and his general conversation had a liberal turn, and such as tended to undermine my prejudices. But what contributed to open my eyes still more was the conversation of a Mr. Walker, from Ashton-under-Lyne, who preached as a candidate when our old minister was superannuated. He was an avowed Baxterian, and being rejected on that account, his opinions were much canvassed, and he being a guest at the house of my aunt, we soon became very intimate, and I thought I saw much of reason in his sentiments. Thinking farther on these subjects, I was, before I went to the academy, an *Arminian*, but had by no means rejected the doctrine of the Trinity or that of Atonement.

(19.) Though, after I saw reason to change my opinions, I found myself incommoded by the rigour of the congregation with which I was connected, I shall always acknowledge, with great gratitude, that I owe much to it. The business of religion was effectually attended to in it. We were all catechised in public till we were grown up, servants as well as others; the minister always expounded the Scriptures with as much regularity as he preached, and there was hardly a day in the week in which there was not some meeting of one or other part of the congregation. On one evening there was a meeting of the young men for conversation and prayer. This I constantly attended, praying extempore with others when called upon.

(20.) At my aunt's there was a monthly meeting of women, who acquitted themselves in prayer as well as any of the men belonging to the congregation. Being at first a child in the family, I was permitted to attend their meetings, and growing up insensibly, heard them after I was capable of judging. My aunt, after the death of her husband, prayed

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every morning and evening in her family, until I was about seventeen, when that duty devolved upon me.

(21.) The Lord's Day was kept with peculiar strictness. No victuals were dressed on that day in any family. No member of it was permitted to walk out for recreation, but the whole of the day was spent at the public meeting, or at home in reading, meditation, and prayer, in the family or the closet.

(22.) It was my custom at that time to recollect as much as I could of the sermons I heard, and to commit it to writing. This practice I began very early, and continued it until I was able, from the heads of a discourse, to supply the rest myself. For not troubling myself to commit to memory much of the amplification, and writing at home almost as much as I had heard, I insensibly acquired a habit of composing with great readiness; and from this practice I believe I have derived great advantage through life, composition seldom employing so much time as would be necessary to write in long-hand anything I have published.

(23.) By these means, not being disgusted with these strict forms of religion, as many persons of better health and spirits probably might have been, and on which account I am far from recommending the same strictness to others, I acquired in early life a serious turn of mind. Among other things, I had at this time a great aversion to plays and romances, so that I never read any works of this kind except "Robinson Crusoe," until I went to the academy. I well remember seeing my brother Timothy reading a book of knight-errantry, and, with great indignation, I snatched it out of his hands and threw it away. This brother afterwards, when he had for some time followed my father's business (which was that of a cloth-dresser), became, if possible, more serious than I

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had been, and, after an imperfect education, took up the profession of a minister among the Independents, in which he now continues.*

(24.) While I was at the grammar school, I learned "Mr. Annet's Shorthand," and, thinking I could suggest some improvements in it, I wrote to the author, and this was the beginning of a correspondence which lasted several years. He was, as I ever perceived, an unbeliever in Christianity, and a Necessarian. On this subject several letters, written with care on both sides, passed between us, and these Mr. Annet often pressed me to give him leave to publish, but I constantly refused. I had undertaken the defence of philosophical liberty, and the correspondence was closed without my being convinced of the fallacy of my arguments, though upon studying the subject regularly, in the course of my academical education afterwards, I became a confirmed Necessarian, and I have through life derived, as I imagine, the greatest advantage from my full persuasion of the truth of that doctrine.

(25.) My aunt and all my relations being strict Calvinists, it was their intention to send me to the academy at *Mile End*, then under the care of Dr. Cawder. But, being at that time an Arminian, I resolutely opposed it, especially upon finding that if I went thither, besides giving an *experience*, I must subscribe my assent to ten printed articles of the strictest Calvinistic faith, and repeat it every six months. My opposition, however, would probably have been to no purpose, and I must have adopted some other mode of life if Mr. Kirkby (above-mentioned) had not interposed, and strongly recommended the academy of Dr. Doddridge, on the idea that I

* Rev. Timothy Priestley.

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should have a better chance of being made a scholar. He had received a good education himself, was a good classical scholar, and had no opinion of the mode of education among the very orthodox Dissenters; and, being fond of me, he was desirous of my having every advantage that could be procured for me. My good aunt, not being a bigoted Calvinist, entered into his views, and, Dr. Doddridge being dead, I was sent to Daventry, and was the first pupil that entered there. My step-mother also, who was a woman of good sense, as well as of religion, had a high opinion of Dr. Doddridge, having been some time housekeeper in his family. She had always recommended his academy, but died before I went thither.

(26.) Three years—viz., from September, 1752, to 1755—I spent at Daventry, with that peculiar satisfaction with which young persons of generous minds usually go through a course of liberal study, in the society of others engaged in the same pursuits, and free from the cares and anxieties which seldom fail to lay hold on them when they come out into the world.

(27.) In my time the academy was in a state peculiarly favourable to the serious pursuit of truth, as the students were about equally divided upon every question of much importance, such as Liberty and Necessity, the sleep of the soul, and all the articles of theological orthodoxy and heresy; in consequence of which all these topics were the subject of continual discussion. Our tutors also were of different opinions, Dr. Ashworth taking the orthodox side of every question, and Mr. Clark,* the sub-tutor, that of heresy, though always with the greatest modesty.

* Rev. Samuel Clark, afterwards minister at Birmingham.

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(28.) Both of our tutors being young—at least as tutors—and some of the senior students excelling more than they could pretend to do in several branches of study, they indulged us in the greatest freedoms, so that our lectures had often the air of friendly conversations on the subjects to which they related. We were permitted to ask whatever questions, and to make whatever remarks, we pleased, and we did it with the greatest, but without any offensive, freedom. The general plan of our studies, which may be seen in Dr. Doddridge's published lectures, was exceedingly favourable to free inquiry, as we were referred to authors on both sides of every question, and were even required to give an account of them. It was also expected that we should abridge the most important of them for our future use. The public library contained all the books to which we were referred.

(29.) It was a reference to "Dr. Hartley's Observations on Man," in the course of our Lectures, that first brought me acquainted with that performance, which immediately engaged my closest attention, and produced the greatest and, in my opinion, the most favourable effect on my general turn of thinking through life. It established me in the belief of the doctrine of Necessity, which I first learned from Collins; it greatly improved that disposition to piety which I brought to the academy, and freed it from the rigour with which it had been tinctured. Indeed, I do not know whether the consideration of Dr. Hartley's theory contributes more to enlighten the mind or improve the heart: it effects both in so super-eminent a degree.

(30.) In this situation, I saw reason to embrace what is generally called the heterodox side of almost every question. But notwithstanding this, and though Dr. Ashworth was earnestly desirous to make me as orthodox as possible, yet, as

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my behaviour was unexceptionable, and as I generally took his part in some little things by which he often drew upon himself the ill-will of many of the students, I was, upon the whole, a favourite with him. I kept up more or less of a correspondence with Dr. Ashworth till the time of his death, though much more so with Mr. Clark. This continued till the very week of his melancholy death, by a fall from his horse at Birmingham, where he was minister.

(31.) Notwithstanding the great freedom of our speculations and debates, the extreme of heresy among us was Arianism; and all of us, I believe, left the academy with a belief, more or less qualified, of the doctrine of *atonement*.

(32.) Warm friendships never fail to be contracted at places of liberal education, and, when they are well chosen, are of singular use; such was mine with Mr. Alexander, of Birmingham. We were in the same class, and, during the first year, occupied the same room. By engagements between ourselves, we rose early and dispatched many articles of business every day. One of them, which continued all the time we were at the academy, was to read every day ten folio pages in some Greek author, and generally a Greek play in the course of the week besides. By this means we became very well acquainted with that language, and with the most valuable authors in it. This exercise we continued long after we left the academy, communicating to each other by letter an account of what we read. My life becoming more occupied than his, he continued his application to Greek longer than I did, so that before his death he was, I imagine, one of the best Greek scholars in this or any other country. My attention was always more drawn to mathematical and philosophical studies than his was.

(33.) These voluntary engagements were the more necessary

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in the course of our academical studies, as there was then no provision made for teaching the learned languages. We had even no compositions or orations in Latin. Our course of lectures was also defective in containing no lectures on the Scriptures, or on ecclesiastical history, and, by the students in general (and Mr. Alexander and myself were no exceptions), commentators in general, and ecclesiastical history also, were held in contempt. On leaving the academy, he went to study under his uncle, Dr. Benson,* and with him learned to value the critical study of the Scriptures so much that at length he almost confined his attention to them.

(34.) My other particular friends among my fellow-students were Mr. Henry Holland, of my own class, Messrs. Whitehead, Smithson, Rotherham, and Scholefield,† in that above me, and Mr. Tayler‡ in that below me. With all these I kept up more or less of a correspondence, and our friendship was terminated only by the death of those who are now dead —viz., the three first-named of these six—and I hope it will subsist to the same period with those who now survive.

(35.) All the while I was at the academy I never lost sight of the great object of my studies, which was the duties of a Christian minister, and there it was that I laid the general plan which I have executed since. Particularly, I there composed the first copy of my "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion," Mr. Clark, to whom I communicated

* Dr. Benson, the intimate friend of Lardner, and, for some time, Lardner's colleague in the Ministry.

† Rev. Radcliffe Scholefield became minister of the Old Meeting House, at Birmingham.

‡ Rev. Thomas Tayler became assistant-tutor at Daventry, afterwards chaplain to Lady Abney, at Stoke Newington, and preacher at Carter Lane Chapel, London.

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my scheme, carefully perusing every section of it, and talking over the subject of it with me.

(36.) But I was much discouraged even then with the *impediment in my speech* which I inherited from my family, and which still attends me. Sometimes I absolutely stammered, and my anxiety about it was the cause of much distress to me. However, like St. Paul's *thorn in the flesh*, I hope it has not been without its use. Without some such check as this, I might have been disputatious in company, or might have been seduced by the love of popular applause as a preacher; whereas, my conversation and my delivery in the pulpit having nothing in them that was generally striking, I hope I have been more attentive to qualifications of a superior kind.

(37.) It is not, I believe, usual for young persons in Dissenting academies to think much of their future situations in life. Indeed, we are happily precluded from that by the impossibility of succeeding in any application for particular places. We often, indeed, amused ourselves with the idea of our dispersion in all parts of the kingdom, after living so happily together; and used to propose plans of meeting at certain times, and smile at the different appearance we should probably make after being ten or twenty years settled in the world. But nothing of this kind was ever seriously resolved upon by us. For my own part, I can truly say I had very little ambition, except to distinguish myself by my application to the studies proper to my profession; and I cheerfully listened to the first proposal that my tutor made to me, in consequence of an application made to him to provide a minister for the people of Needham Market, in Suffolk, though it was very remote from my friends in Yorkshire, and a very inconsiderable place.

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(38.) When I went to preach at Needham as a candidate, I found a small congregation, about an hundred people, under a Mr. Meadows,* who was superannuated. They had been without a minister the preceding year, on account of the smallness of the salary; but there being some respectable and agreeable families among them, I flattered myself that I should be useful and happy in the place, and therefore accepted the unanimous invitation to be assistant to Mr. Meadows, with a view to succeed him when he died. He was a man of some fortune.

(39.) This congregation had been used to receive assistance from both the Presbyterian and Independent funds; but, upon my telling them that I did not choose to have anything to do with the Independents, and asking them whether they were able to make up the salary they promised me (which was forty pounds per annum) without any aid from the latter fund, they assured me they could. I soon, however, found that they deceived themselves, for the most that I ever received from them was in the proportion of about thirty pounds per annum, when the expense of my board exceeded twenty pounds.†

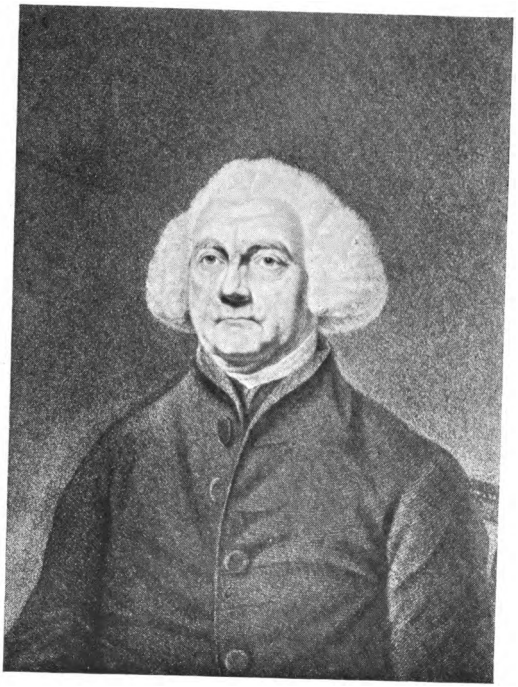
(40.) Notwithstanding this, everything else for the first half-year appeared very promising, and I was happy in the success of my schemes for promoting the interest of religion

* Rev. John Meadows. His father was the Rev. John Meadows, of Ousden, one of the two thousand ejected from their livings by the Act of Uniformity in 1662; and his niece became the grandmother of the Rev. James Martineau and his sister, Miss Harriet Martineau.

† It is instructive to compare the value of money at this time with that when Dr. Doddridge was appointed to his first pulpit at Kibworth a quarter of a century earlier. He writes in 1728: "The salary cannot possibly amount to above £35 a year; but I think I may board for about £10 a year."

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in the place. I catechised the children, though there were not many, using Dr. Watts' catechism; and I opened my lectures on the theory of religion from the "Institutes," which I had composed at the academy, admitting all persons to attend them, without distinction of sex or age; but in this I soon found that I had acted imprudently. A minister in that neighbourhood had been obliged to leave his place on account of Arianism; and though nothing had been said to me on the subject, and from the people so readily consenting to give up the Independent fund I thought they could not have much bigotry among them, I found that when I came to treat of the *Unity of God* merely as an article of religion, several of my audience were attentive to nothing but the soundness of my faith in the doctrine of the Trinity.

(41.) Also, though I had made it a rule to myself to introduce nothing that could lead to controversy into the pulpit; yet, making no secret of my real opinions in conversation, it was soon found that I was an Arian. From the time of this discovery my hearers fell off apace, especially as the old minister took a decided part against me. The principal families, however, still continued with me; but notwithstanding this, my salary fell far short of thirty pounds per annum; and if it had not been for Dr. Benson and Dr. Kippis,* especially the former, procuring me now and then an extraordinary five pounds from different charities, I do not believe that I could have subsisted. I shall always remember their kindness to me at a time when I stood in so much need of it.

(42.) When I was in this situation, a neighbouring minister, whose intimate friend had conformed to the church

* Dr. Andrew Kippis, who became tutor of the New College at Hackney.

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of England, talked to me on that subject. He himself, I perceived, had no great objection to it; but, rejecting the proposal as a thing that I could not think of, he never mentioned it to me any more.

(43.) To these difficulties, arising from the sentiments of my congregation, was added that of the failure of all remittances from my aunt, owing in part to the ill offices of my orthodox relations, but chiefly to her being exhausted by her liberality to others, and thinking that when I was settled in the world I ought to be no longer burdensome to her. Together with me, she had brought up a niece, who was almost her only companion, and being deformed, could not have subsisted without the greatest part, at least, of all she had to bequeath. In consequence of these circumstances, though my aunt had always assured me that, if I chose to be a minister, she would leave me independent of the profession, I was satisfied she was not able to perform her promise, and freely consented to her leaving all she had to my cousin; I had only a silver tankard as a token of her remembrance. She had spared no expense in my education, and that was doing more for me than giving me an estate.

(44.) But what contributed greatly to my distress was the *impediment in my speech*, which had increased so much as to make preaching very painful, and took from me all chance of recommending myself to any better place. In this state, hearing of the proposal of one, Mr. Angier, to cure all defects of speech, I prevailed upon my aunt to enable me to pay his price, which was twenty guineas; and this was the first occasion of my visiting London. Accordingly, I attended him about a month, taking an oath not to reveal his method, and I received some temporary benefit; but soon relapsed again, and spoke worse than ever. When I went to London,

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it was in company with Mr. Smithson, who was settled at Harlestone, in Norfolk. By him I was introduced to Dr. Kippis and Dr. Benson, and by the latter to Dr. Price, but not at that time.

(45.) At Needham I felt the effect of a low despised situation, together with that arising from the want of popular talents. There were several vacancies in congregations in that neighbourhood, where my sentiments would have been no objection to me, but I was never thought of. Even my next neighbour, whose sentiments were as free as my own, and known to be so, declined making exchanges with me, which, when I left that part of the country, he acknowledged was not owing to any dislike his people had to me as heretical, but for other reasons, the more genteel part of his hearers always absenting themselves when they heard I was to preach for him. But, visiting that country some years afterwards, when I had raised myself to some degree of notice in the world, and being invited to preach in that very pulpit, the same people crowded to hear me, though my elocution was not much improved, and they professed to admire one of the same discourses they had formerly despised.

(46.) Notwithstanding these unfavourable circumstances, I was far from being unhappy at Needham. I was boarded in a family, from which I received much satisfaction. I firmly believed that a wise Providence was disposing everything for the best, and I applied with great assiduity to my studies, which were classical, mathematical, and theological. These required but few books. As to experimental philosophy, I had always cultivated an acquaintance with it, but I had not the means of prosecuting it.

(47.) With respect to miscellaneous reading, I was pretty well supplied by means of a library belonging to Mr. S.

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Alexander, a Quaker, to which I had the freest access.* Here it was that I was first acquainted with any person of that persuasion; and I must acknowledge my obligation to many of them in every future stage of my life. I have met with the noblest instances of liberality of sentiment, and the truest generosity among them.

(48.) My studies, however, were chiefly theological. Having left the academy, as I have observed, with a qualified belief of the doctrine of *atonement*, such as is found in Mr. Tomkin's book, entitled "Jesus Christ the Mediator," I was desirous of getting some more definite ideas on the subject, and with that view set myself to peruse the whole of the "Old and New Testament," and to collect from them all the texts that appeared to me to have any relation to the subject. This I therefore did with the greatest care, arranging them under a great variety of heads. At the same time I did not fail to note such *general considerations* as occurred to me while I was thus employed. The consequence of this was, what I had no apprehension of when I began the work, viz., a full persuasion that the doctrine of atonement, even in its most qualified sense, had no countenance either from Scripture or reason. Satisfied of this, I proceeded to digest my observations into a regular treatise, which a friend of mine, without mentioning my name, submitted to the perusal of Dr. Fleming and Dr. Lardner. In consequence of this, I was urged by them to publish the greater part of what I had written. But being then about to leave Needham, I desired them to do whatever they thought proper with respect to it, and they published about half of my piece, under the title of the "Doctrine of Remission," &c.

* This appears to be one of the Alexanders of Ipswich, a part of which family lived at Needham Market.

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(49.) This circumstance introduced me to the acquaintance of Dr. Lardner, whom I always called upon when I visited London. The last time I saw him, which was little more than a year before his death, having by letter requested him to give me some assistance with respect to the history I then prepared to write of the corruptions of Christianity, and especially that article of it, he took down a large bundle of pamphlets, and turning them over, at length showing me my own, said, "This contains my sentiments on the subject." He had then forgotten that I wrote it, and on my remarking it, he shook his head, and said that his memory began to fail him; and that he had taken me for another person. He was then at the advanced age of ninety-one. This anecdote is trifling in itself, but it relates to a great and good man.

(50.) I have observed that Dr. Lardner only wished to publish a part of the treatise which my friend put into his hand. The other part of it contained remarks on the reasoning of the Apostle Paul, which he could not by any means approve. They were, therefore, omitted in this publication. But the attention which I gave to the writings of this Apostle, at the time that I examined them, in order to collect passages relating to the doctrine of atonement, satisfied me that his reasoning was in many places far from being conclusive; and in a separate work I examined every passage in which his reasoning appeared to me to be defective, or his conclusions ill-supported; and I thought them to be pretty numerous.

(51.) At that time I had not read any commentary on the Scriptures, except that of Mr. Henry,* when I was young. However, seeing so much reason to be dissatisfied with the

* Rev. Matthew Henry, son of Rev. Philip Henry, who was ejected from his living at Worthenbury by the Act of Uniformity in 1662.

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Apostle Paul, as a reasoner, I read "Dr. Taylor's* Paraphrase on the Epistle to the Romans," but it gave me no sort of satisfaction; and his general "Key to the Epistles" still less. I therefore, at that time, wrote some remarks on it, which were a long time after published in the "Theological Repository," vol. iv.

(52.) As I found that Dr. Lardner did not at all relish any of my observations on the imperfections of the sacred writers, I did not put this treatise into his hands; but I showed it to some of my younger friends, and also to Dr. Kippis; and he advised me to publish it under the character of an unbeliever, in order to draw the more attention to it. This I did not choose, having always had a great aversion to assume any character that was not my own, even so much as disputing for the sake of discovering truth. I cannot ever say that I was quite reconciled to the idea of writing to a fictitious person, as in my "Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever," though nothing can be more innocent, or sometimes more proper; our Saviour's parables implying a much greater departure from strict truth than those letters do. I therefore wrote the book with great freedom, indeed, but as a Christian, and an admirer of the Apostle Paul, as I always was in other respects.

(53.) When I was at Nantwich, I sent this treatise to the press; but when nine sheets were printed off, Dr. Kippis dissuaded me from proceeding, or from publishing anything of the kind, until I should be more known, and my character better established. I therefore desisted; but when I opened the

* Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, who, in 1759, accepted the post of Divinity Tutor to the newly founded Dissenting Academy at Warrington. His "Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin" is his best known work. See his death, on page 29.

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"Theological Repository," I inserted in that work every thing that was of much consequence in the other, in order to its being submitted to the examination of learned Christians. Accordingly, these communications were particularly animadverted upon by Mr. Willet, of Newcastle, under the signature of W. W. But I cannot say that his remarks gave me much satisfaction.

(54.) When I was at Needham, I likewise drew up a treatise on the doctrine of *Divine influence*, having collected a number of texts for that purpose, and arranged them under proper heads, as I had done those relating to the doctrine of atonement. But I published nothing relating to it until I made use of some of the observations in my *sermon* on that subject, delivered at an ordination, and published many years afterwards.*

(55.) While I was in this retired situation, I had, in consequence of much pains and thought, become persuaded of the falsity of the doctrine of atonement, of the inspiration of the authors of the books of Scripture as writers, and of all idea of supernatural influence, except for the purpose of miracles. But I was still an Arian, having never turned my attention to the Socinian doctrine, and contenting myself with seeing the absurdity of the Trinitarian system.

(56.) Another task that I imposed on myself, and in part executed at Needham, was an accurate comparison of the Hebrew text of the *Hagiographa* and the prophets with the version of the Septuagint, noting all the variations, &c. This I had about half finished before I left that place; and I never resumed it, except to do that occasionally for particular

* A sermon entitled *The Doctrine of Divine Influence on the Human Mind*, preached at the ordination of Messrs. T. and J. Jervis, and printed in vol. xv. of his works.

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passages, which I then began, though with many disadvantages, with a design to go through the whole. I had no polyglot Bible, and could have little help from the labours of others.

(57.) The most learned of my acquaintance in this situation was Mr. Scott, of Ipswich, who was well versed in the Oriental languages, especially the Arabic. But though he was far from being Calvinistical, he gave me no encouragement in the very free inquiries which I then entered upon. Being excluded from all communication with the more orthodox ministers in that part of the country, all my acquaintance among the Dissenting ministers, besides Mr. Scott, were Mr. Tailor, of Stowmarket; Mr. Dickinson, of Diss; and Mr. Smithson, of Harlestone; and it is rather remarkable that we all left that country in the course of the same year; Mr. Tailor removing to Carter Lane, in London,* Mr. Dickinson to Sheffield, and Mr. Smithson to Nottingham.

(58.) But I was very happy in a great degree of intimacy with Mr. Chauvett, the rector of Stowmarket. He was descended of French parents; and I think was not born in England. Whilst he lived, we were never long without seeing each other. But he was subject to great unevenness of spirits, sometimes the most cheerful man living, and at other times most deplorably low. In one of these fits he at length put an end to his life. I heard afterwards that he had at one time been confined for insanity, and had even made the same attempt some time before.

(59.) Like most other young men of a liberal education, I had conceived a great aversion to the business of a school-

* As assistant-minister to Rev. E. Pickard, which post he held for six years, when, dying, he was succeeded by Rev. Thomas Tayler, mentioned below, page 14.

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master, and had often said that I would have recourse to anything else for a maintenance in preference to it. But having no other resource, I was at length compelled by necessity to make some attempt in that way; and for this purpose I printed and distributed *proposals*, but without any effect. Not that I was thought to be unqualified for this employment, but because I was not orthodox. I had proposed to teach the classics, mathematics, &c., for half-a-guinea per quarter, and to board the pupils in the house with myself for twelve guineas per annum.

(60.) Finding this scheme not to answer, I proposed to give lectures to grown persons in such branches of science as I could conveniently procure the means of doing; and I began with reading about twelve lectures on the *use of the globes*, at half-a-guinea. I had one course of ten hearers, which did something more than pay for my globes; and I should have proceeded in this way, adding to my apparatus as I should have been able to afford it, if I had not left that place, which was in the following manner.

(61.) My situation being well known to my friends, Mr. Gill, a distant relation by my mother, who had taken much notice of me before I went to the academy, and had often lent me books, procured me an invitation to preach as a candidate at Sheffield, on the resignation of Mr. Wadsworth. Accordingly, I did preach as a candidate, but though my opinions were no objection to me there, I was not approved. But Mr. Haynes, the other minister, perceiving that I had no chance at Sheffield, told me that he could recommend me to a congregation at Nantwich, in Cheshire, where he himself had been settled; and as it was at a great distance from Needham, he would endeavour to procure me an invitation to preach there for a year certain. This he did, and I gladly

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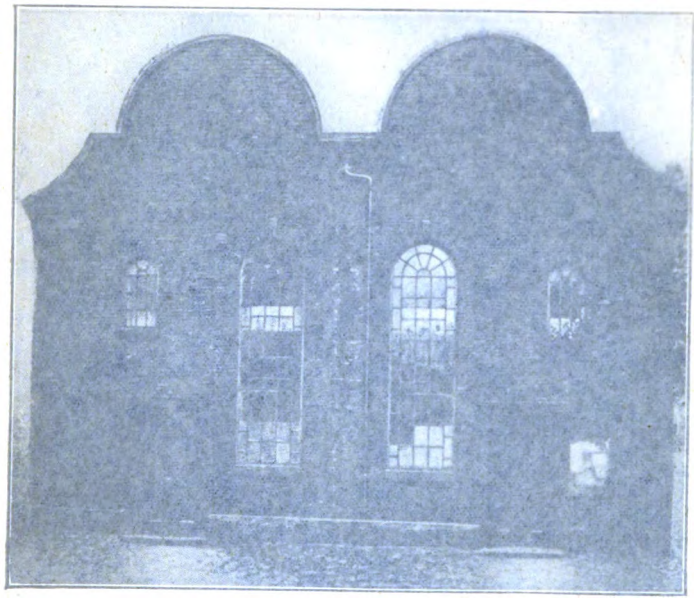
accepting of it, removed from Needham, going thence to London by sea, to save expense. This was in 1758, after having been at Needham just three years.

(62.) At Nantwich I found a good-natured, friendly people, with whom I lived three years very happily; and in this situation I heard nothing of those controversies which had been the topics of almost every conversation in Suffolk; and the consequence was that I gave little attention to them myself. Indeed, it was hardly in my power to do it, on account of my engagement with a school, which I was soon able to establish, and to which I gave almost all my attention; and in this employment, contrary to my expectations, I found the greatest satisfaction, notwithstanding the confinement and labour attending it.

(63.) My school generally consisted of about thirty boys, and I had a separate room for about half-a-dozen young ladies. Thus I was employed from seven in the morning until four in the afternoon, without any interval except one hour for dinner, and I never gave a holiday on any consideration, the red-letter days, as they are called, excepted. Immediately after this employment in my own school-rooms, I went to teach in the family of Mr. Tomkinson, an eminent attorney, and a man of large fortune, whose recommendation was of the greatest service to me; and here I continued until seven in the evening. I had therefore but little leisure for reading or for improving myself in any way, except what necessarily arose from my employment.

(64.) Being engaged in the business of a schoolmaster, I made it my study to regulate it in the best manner, and I think I may say with truth that in no school was more business done, or with more satisfaction, either to the master or the scholars, than in this of mine. Many of my scholars

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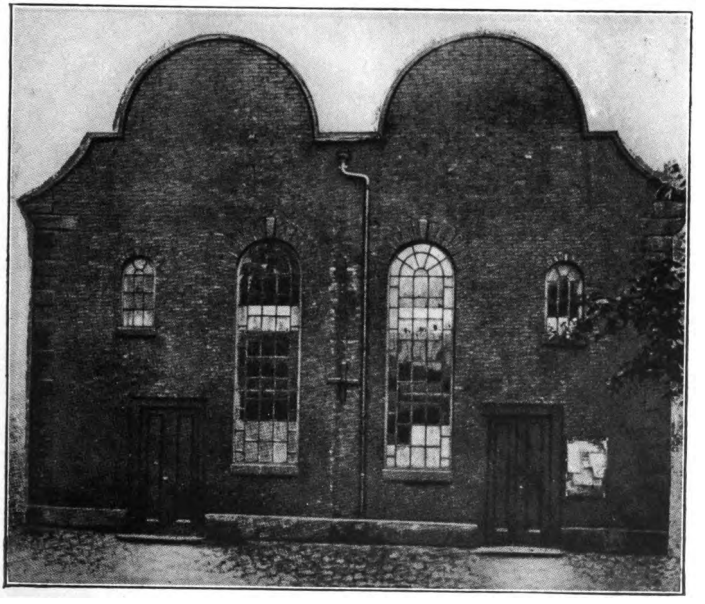
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are probably living, and I am confident that they will say that this is no vain boast.

(65.) At Needham I was barely able, with the greatest economy, to keep out of debt (though this I always made a point of doing, at all events), but at Nantwich my school soon enabled me to purchase a few books, and some philosophical instruments, as a small air-pump, an electrical machine, &c. These I taught my scholars in the highest class to keep in order, and make use of, and by entertaining their parents and friends with experiments, in which the scholars were generally the operators, and sometimes the lecturers too, I considerably extended the reputation of my school; though I had no other object originally than gratifying my own taste. I had no leisure, however, to make any original experiments until many years after this time.

(66.) As there were few children in the congregation (which did not consist of more than sixty persons, and a great proportion of them travelling Scotchmen), there was no scope for exertion with respect to my duty as a minister. I therefore contented myself with giving the people what assistance I could at their own houses, where there were young persons; and I added very few sermons to those which I had composed at Needham, where I never failed to make, at least, one every week.

(67.) Being boarded with Mr. Eddowes, a very sociable and sensible man, and at the same time the person of the greatest property in the congregation, and who was fond of music, I was induced to learn to play a little on the English flute, as the easiest instrument; and though I was never a proficient in it, my playing contributed more or less to my amusement many years of my life. I would recommend the

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knowledge and practice of music to all studious persons; and it will be better for them if, like myself, they should have no very fine ear, or exquisite taste; as by this means they will be more easily pleased, and be less apt to be offended when the performances they hear are but indifferent.

(68.) At Nantwich I had hardly any literary acquaintance besides Mr. Brereton, a clergyman in the neighbourhood, who had a taste for astronomy, philosophy, and literature in general. I often slept at his house, in a room to which he gave my name. But his conduct afterwards was unworthy of his profession.

(69.) Of Dissenting ministers, I saw most of Mr. Keay, of Whitchurch, and Dr. Harwood, who lived and had a school at Congleton, preaching alternately at Leek and Wheelock, the latter place about ten miles from Nantwich. Being both of us schoolmasters, and having in some respects the same pursuits, we made exchanges for the sake of spending a Sunday evening together every six weeks in the summer time. He was a good classical scholar, and a very entertaining companion.

(70.) In my congregation there was (out of the house in which I was boarded) hardly more than one family in which I could spend a leisure hour with much satisfaction, and that was Mr. James Caldwall's, a Scotchman. Indeed, several of the travelling Scotchmen, who frequented the place, but made no long stay at any time, were men of very good sense; and what I thought extraordinary, not one of them was at all Calvinistical.

(71.) My engagements in teaching allowed me but little time for composing anything while I was at Nantwich. There, however, I recomposed my "Observations on the Character and Reasoning of the Apostle Paul," as mentioned

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before. For the use of my school, I then wrote an English Grammar* on a new plan, leaving out all such technical terms as were borrowed from other languages, and had no corresponding modifications in ours—as the future tense, &c.—and to this I afterwards subjoined "Observations for the Use of Proficients in the Language,"† from the notes which I collected at Warrington, where, being tutor in the languages and Belles Lettres, I gave particular attention to the English language, and intended to have composed a large treatise on the structure and present state of it. But dropping the scheme in another situation, I lately gave such parts of my collection as I had made no use of to Mr. Herbert Croft, of Oxford, on his communicating to me his design of compiling a dictionary and grammar of our language.

(72.) The academy at Warrington was instituted when I was at Needham, and Mr. Clark, knowing the attention that I had given to the learned languages when I was at Daventry, had then joined with Dr. Benson and Dr. Taylor in recommending me as tutor in the languages. But Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Aikin, whose qualifications were superior to mine, was justly preferred to me. However, on the death of Dr. Taylor, and the advancement of Mr. Aikin to be tutor in divinity, I was invited to succeed him. This I accepted, though my school promised to be more gainful to me. But my employment at Warrington would be more liberal, and less painful. It was also a means of extending my con-

* Printed in 1761.

† Printed in 1772, at London. His lectures on the "Theory of Language and Universal Grammar" were printed the same year at Warrington. David Hume was made sensible of the Gallicisms and peculiarities of his style by reading this grammar. He acknowledged it to Mr. Griffith, the bookseller.—J. P.

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nexions. But, as I told the persons who brought me the invitation—viz., Mr. Seddon and Mr. Holland, of Bolton—I should have preferred the office of teaching the mathematics and natural philosophy, for which I had, at that time, a great predilection.

(73.) My removal to Warrington was in September, 1761, after a residence of just three years at Nantwich. In this new situation I continued six years, and in the second year I married a daughter of Mr. Isaac Wilkinson, an ironmaster, near Wrexham, in Wales, with whose family I had become acquainted in consequence of having the youngest son, William, at my school at Nantwich. This proved a very suitable and happy connexion, my wife being a woman of an excellent understanding, much improved by reading, of great fortitude and strength of mind, and of a temper in the highest degree affectionate and generous; feeling strongly for others, and little for herself. Also, greatly excelling in everything relating to household affairs, she entirely relieved me of all concern of that kind, which allowed me to give all my time to the prosecution of my studies and the other duties of my station. And though, in consequence of her father becoming impoverished, and wholly dependent on his children in the latter part of his life, I had little fortune with her, I unexpectedly found a great resource in her two brothers, who had become wealthy, especially the elder of them. At Warrington I had a daughter, Sarah, who was afterwards married to Mr. William Finch, of Heath Forge, near Dudley.

(74.) Though, at the time of my removal to Warrington, I had no particular fondness for the studies relating to my profession then, I applied to them with great assiduity, and, besides composing courses of lectures on "The Theory of

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Language," and on "Oratory and Criticism," on which my predecessor had lectured, I introduced lectures on "History and General Policy," on the "Laws and Constitutions of England," and on the "History of England." This I did in consequence of observing that, though most of our pupils were young men designed for situations in civil and active life, every article in the plan of their education was adapted to the learned professions.

(75.) In order to recommend such studies as I introduced, I composed an essay on "A Course of Liberal Education for Civil and Active Life," with "Syllabuses" of my three new courses of lectures; and Dr. Brown having just then published a plan of education, in which he recommended it to be undertaken by the State, I added some "Remarks on his Treatise," showing how inimical it was to liberty, and the natural rights of parents. This leading me to consider the subject of civil and political liberty, I published my thoughts on it in an essay on "Government," which, in a second edition, I much enlarged, including in it what I wrote in answer to Dr. Balguy on church authority, as well as my animadversions on Dr. Brown.

(76.) My lectures on "The Theory of Language and Universal Grammar" were printed for the use of the students, but they were not published. Those on "Oratory and Criticism" I published when I was with Lord Shelburne, and those on "History and General Policy" are now printed, and about to be published.*

(77.) Finding no public exercises at Warrington, I introduced them there, so that afterwards, every Saturday, the

* This work has been reprinted in Philadelphia, with additions, particularly of a chapter on the Government of the United States.—J. P.

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tutors, all the students, and often strangers, were assembled to hear English and Latin compositions, and sometimes to hear the delivery of speeches and the exhibition of scenes in plays. It was my province to teach elocution, and also logic and Hebrew. The first of these I retained, but, after a year or two, I exchanged the two last articles with Dr. Aikin for the civil law, and one year I gave a course of lectures in anatomy.

(78.) With a view to lead the students to a facility in writing English, I encouraged them to write in verse. This I did, not with any design to make them poets, but to give them a greater facility in writing prose, and this method I would recommend to all tutors. I was myself far from having any pretension to the character of a poet, but, in the early part of my life, I was a great versifier, and this, I believe, as well as my custom of writing after preachers, mentioned before, contributed to the ease with which I always wrote prose. Mrs. Barbauld has told me that it was the perusal of some verses of mine that first induced her to write anything in verse, so that this country is in some measure indebted to me for one of the best poets it can boast of. Several of her first poems were written when she was in my house on occasions that occurred while she was there.

(79.) It was while I was at Warrington that I published my "Chart of Biography," though I had begun to construct it at Nantwich. Lord Willoughby, of Parham, who lived in Lancashire, being pleased with the idea of it, I, with his consent, inscribed it to him; but he died before the publication of it. The "Chart of History," corresponding to it, I drew up some time after at Leeds.

(80.) I was in this situation, when, going to Lon-

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[illegible] often strangers, were assembled [illegible] compositions, and sometimes to [illegible] and the exhibition of scenes in [illegible] to teach elocution, and also logic. The first [illegible] these I retained, but, after a year [illegible] last articles with Dr. Aikin [illegible], and [illegible] I gave a course of lectures in

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don*, and being introduced to Dr. Price†, Mr. Canton, Dr. Watson (the physician), and Dr. Franklin, I was led to attend to the subject of experimental philosophy more than I had done before; and having composed all the lectures I had occasion to deliver, and finding myself at liberty for any undertaking, I mentioned to Dr. Franklin an idea that had occurred to me of writing the history of discoveries in electricity, which had been his favourite study. This I told him might be an useful work, and that I would willingly undertake it, provided I could be furnished with the books necessary for the purpose. This he readily undertook, and my other friends assisting him in it, I set about the work, without having the least idea of doing anything more than writing a distinct and methodical account of all that had been done by others. Having, however, a pretty good machine, I was led, in the course of my writing the history, to endeavour to ascertain several facts which were disputed; and this led me by degrees into a large field of original experiments, in which I spared no expense that I could possibly furnish.

(81.) These experiments employed a great proportion of my leisure time; and yet before the complete expiration of the year, in which I gave the plan of my work to Dr. Franklin, I sent him a copy of it in print. In the same year, five hours of every day were employed in lectures, public or

* He always spent one month in every year in London, which was of great use to him. He saw and heard a great deal. He generally made additions to his library and his chemical apparatus. A new turn was frequently given to his ideas. New and useful acquaintances were formed, and old ones confirmed.—J. P.

† Minister of Newington Green Chapel.

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private, and one two months' vacation I spent chiefly at Bristol, on a visit to my father-in-law.

(82.) This I do not mention as a subject of boasting. For many persons have done more in the same time; but as an answer to those who have objected to some of my later writings, as hasty performances. For none of my publications were better received than this "History of Electricity," which was the most hasty of them all. However, whether my publications have taken up more or less time, I am confident that more would not have contributed to their perfection, in any essential particular; and about anything farther I have never been very solicitous. My object was not to acquire the character of a fine writer, but of an useful one. I can also truly say that gain was never the chief object of any of my publications. Several of them were written with the prospect of certain loss.

(83.) During the course of my electrical experiments in this year, I kept up a constant correspondence with Dr. Franklin, and the rest of my philosophical friends in London; and my letters circulated among them all, as also every part of my history as it was transcribed. This correspondence would have made a considerable volume, and it took up much time; but it was of great use with respect to the accuracy of my experiments, and the perfection of my work.

(84.) After the publication of my "Chart of Biography," Dr. Percival, of Manchester, then a student at Edinburgh, procured me the title of Doctor of Laws from that university; and not long after my new experiments in electricity were the means of introducing me into the Royal Society, with the recommendation of Dr. Franklin, Dr. Watson, Mr. Canton, and Dr. Price.

(85.) In the whole time of my being at Warrington, I was

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singularly happy in the society of my fellow tutors,* and of Mr. Seddon, the minister of the place. We drank tea together every Saturday, and our conversation was equally instructive and pleasing. I often thought it not a little extraordinary, that four persons, who had no previous knowledge of each other, should have been brought to unite in conducting such a scheme as this, and all be zealous Necessarians, as we were. We were likewise all Arians, and the only subject of much consequence on which we differed, was respecting the doctrine of atonement, concerning which Dr. Aikin held some obscure notions. Accordingly, this was frequently the topic of our friendly conversations. The only Socinian in the neighbourhood was Mr. Seddon, of Manchester; and we all wondered at him. But then we never entered into any particular examination of the subject.

(86.) Receiving some of the pupils into my own house, I was by this means led to form some valuable friendships, but especially with Mr. Samuel Vaughan, a friendship which has continued hitherto, has in a manner connected our families, and will, I doubt not, continue through life. The two eldest of his sons were boarded with me.

(87.) The tutors having sufficient society among themselves, we had not much acquaintance out of the academy. Sometimes, however, I made an excursion to the towns in the neighbourhood. At Liverpool I was always received by Mr. Bentley, afterwards partner with Mr. Wedgwood, a man of excellent taste, improved understanding, and a good

* At Warrington he had for colleagues and successors, Dr. John Taylor, author of the "Hebrew Concordance," and of several other works on "Original Sin," "Atonement," &c.; Dr. Aikin, the elder; Dr. Reinhold Forster, the naturalist and traveller; Dr. Enfield, and Mr. Walker.—J. P.

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disposition, but an unbeliever in Christianity, which was, therefore, often the subject of our conversation. He was then a widower, and we generally, and contrary to my usual custom, sat up late. At Manchester I was always the guest of Mr. Potter, whose son Thomas was boarded with me. He was one of the worthiest men that ever lived. At Chowbent I was much acquainted with Mr. Mort, a man equally distinguished by his cheerfulness and liberality of sentiment.

(88.) Of the ministers in the neighbourhood, I recollect with much satisfaction the interviews I had with Mr. Godwin, of Gateacre; Mr. Holland, of Bolton; and Dr. Enfield, of Liverpool, afterwards tutor at Warrington.

(89.) Though all the tutors in my time lived in the most perfect harmony, though we all exerted ourselves to the utmost, and there was no complaint of want of discipline, the academy did not flourish. There had been an unhappy difference between Dr. Taylor and the trustees, in consequence of which all his friends, who were numerous, were our enemies; and too many of the subscribers, being probably weary of the subscription, were willing to lay hold of any pretence for dropping it, and of justifying their conduct afterwards.

(90.) It is possible that in time we might have overcome the prejudices we laboured under; but there being no prospect of things being any better, and my wife having very bad health, on her account chiefly I wished for a removal, though nothing could be more agreeable to me at the time than the whole of my employment, and all the laborious part of it was over. The terms also on which we took boarders, viz., fifteen pounds per annum, and my salary being only one hundred pounds per annum, with a house, it was not possible, even living with the greatest frugality, to make any provision

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for a family. I was there six years, most laboriously employed, for nothing more than a bare subsistence. I therefore listened to an invitation to take the charge of the congregation of Mill Hill chapel, at Leeds,* where I was pretty well known, and thither I removed in September, 1767.

(91.) Though, while I was at Warrington, it was no part of my duty to preach, I had from choice continued the practice, and, wishing to keep up the character of a Dissenting minister, I chose to be ordained while I was there; and though I was far from having conquered my tendency to stammer, and probably never shall be able to do it effectually, I had, by taking much pains, improved my pronunciation some time before I left Nantwich, where, for the two first years, this impediment had increased so much that I once informed the people that I must give up the business of preaching, and confine myself to my school. However, by making a practice of reading very loud and very slow every day, I at length succeeded in getting in some measure the better of this defect, but I am still obliged occasionally to have recourse to the same expedient.

(92.) At Leeds I continued six years very happy with a liberal, friendly, and harmonious congregation, to whom my services (of which I was not sparing) were very acceptable. Here I had no unreasonable prejudices to contend with, so that I had full scope for every kind of exertion, and I can truly say that I always considered the office of a Christian minister as the most honourable of any upon earth, and in the studies proper to it I always took the greatest pleasure.

(93.) In this situation I naturally resumed my application

* Dr. Priestley's removal to Warrington made the link between the Independent (Congregational) pulpits he had hitherto occupied and the Arian (Unitarian) pulpits he afterwards filled.

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to speculative theology, which had occupied me at Needham, and which had been interrupted by the business of teaching at Nantwich and Warrington. By reading with care "Dr. Lardner's Letter on the Logos," I became what is called a Socinian soon after my settlement at Leeds, and, after giving the closest attention to the subject, I have seen more and more reason to be satisfied with that opinion to this day, and likewise to be more impressed with the idea of its importance.

(94.) On reading Mr. "Mann's Dissertation on the Times of the Birth and Death of Christ," I was convinced that he was right in his opinion of our Saviour's ministry having continued little more than one year, and on this plan I drew out a "Harmony of the Gospels," the outline of which I first published in the "Theological Repository," and afterwards separately and at large both in Greek and English, with notes and an occasional paraphrase. In the same work I published my "Essay on the Doctrine of Atonement," improved from the tract published by Dr. Lardner, and also my animadversions on the reasoning of the Apostle Paul.

(95.) The plan of this "Repository" occurred to me on seeing some notes that Mr. Turner, of Wakefield, had drawn up on several passages of Scripture, which I was concerned to think should be lost. He very much approved of my proposal of an occasional publication for the purpose of preserving such original observations as could otherwise probably never see the light. Of this work I published three volumes while I was at Leeds, and he never failed to give me an article for every number of which they were composed.

(96.) Giving particular attention to the duties of my office, I wrote several tracts for the use of my congregation, as two "Catechisms," an "Address to Masters of Families on the Subject of Family Prayer," a "Discourse on the Lord's

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Supper," and on "Church Discipline," and "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion." Here I formed three classes of catechumens, and took great pleasure in instructing them in the principles of religion. In this respect, I hope my example has been of use in other congregations.

(97.) The first of my controversial treatises was written here in reply to some angry remarks on my "Discourse on the Lord's Supper," by Mr. Venn, a clergyman in the neighbourhood. I also wrote "Remarks on Dr. Balguy's Sermon on Church Authority," and on some paragraphs in Judge "Blackstone's Commentaries" relating to the Dissenters. To the two former no reply was made, but to the last the judge replied in a small pamphlet, on which I addressed a letter to him in the "St. James's Chronicle." This controversy led me to print another pamphlet, entitled "The Principles and Conduct of the Dissenters with respect to the Civil and Ecclesiastical Constitution of this Country." With the encouragement of Dr. Price and Dr. Kippis, I also wrote an "Address to Protestant Dissenters as such," but without my name. Several of these pamphlets having been animadverted upon by an anonymous acquaintance, who thought I had laid too much stress on the principles of the Dissenters, I wrote a defence of my conduct in letters addressed to him.

(98.) The Methodists being very numerous in Leeds,* and many of the lower sort of my own hearers listening to them, I wrote "An Appeal to the Serious Professors of Christianity," "An Illustration of Particular Texts," and republished the "Trial of Elwall," all in the cheapest manner possible. Those small tracts had a great effect in establishing

* This was when John Wesley was nearly seventy years of age, and in the height of his popularity.

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my hearers in liberal principles of religion, and in a short time had a far more extensive influence than I could have imagined. By this time more than thirty thousand copies of the "Appeal" have been dispersed.

(99.) Besides these theoretical and controversial pieces, I wrote while I was at Leeds, my "Essay on Government," mentioned before; my "English Grammar," enlarged; a "Familiar Introduction to the Study of Electricity;" a "Treatise on Perspective"; and my "Chart of History"; and also some anonymous pieces in favour of civil liberty during the persecution of Mr. Wilkes, the principal of which was "An Address to Dissenters on the Subject of the Difference with America," which I wrote at the request of Dr. Franklin and Dr. Fothergill.

(100.) But nothing of a nature foreign to the duties of my profession engaged my attention while I was at Leeds, so much as the prosecution of my experiments relating to *electricity*, and especially the doctrine of *air*. The last I was led into in consequence of inhabiting a house adjoining to a public brewery, where I at first amused myself with making experiments on the fixed air which I found ready made in the process of fermentation. When I removed from that house, I was under the necessity of making the fixed air for myself; and one experiment leading to another, as I have distinctly and faithfully noted in my various publications on the subject, I by degrees contrived a convenient apparatus for the purpose, but of the cheapest kind.

(101.) When I began these experiments, I knew very little of *chemistry*, and had in a manner no idea on the subject before I attended a course of chemical lectures, delivered in the academy at Warrington, by Dr. Turner, of Liverpool. But I have often thought that upon the whole,

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this circumstance was no disadvantage to me; as in this situation I was led to devise an apparatus, and processes of my own, adapted to my peculiar views. Whereas, if I had been previously accustomed to the usual chemical processes, I should not have so easily thought of any other; and without new modes of operation I should hardly have discovered anything materially new.*

(102.) My first publication on the subject of air was in 1772. It was a small pamphlet, on the method of impregnating water with fixed air; which, being immediately translated into French, excited a great degree of attention to the subject, and this was much increased by the publication of my first paper of experiments, in a large article of the "Philosophical Transactions," the year following, for which I received the gold medal of the Society. My method of impregnating water with fixed air was considered at a meeting of the College of Physicians, before whom I made the experiments, and by them it was recommended to the Lords of the Admiralty (by whom they had been summoned for the purpose), as likely to be of use in the sea scurvy.

(103.) The only person in Leeds who gave much attention to my experiments was Mr. Hey, a surgeon. He was a zealous Methodist, and wrote answers to some of my theological tracts; but we always conversed with the greatest freedom on philosophical subjects, without mentioning

* This necessary attention to economy also aided the simplicity of his apparatus, and was the means, in some degree, of improving it in this important respect. This plainness of his apparatus rendered his experiments easy to be repeated, and gave them accuracy. In this respect he was like his great contemporary, Scheele, whose discoveries were made by means easy to be procured, and at small expense. The French chemists have adopted a practice quite the reverse.—T. C.

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anything relating to theology. When I left Leeds, he begged of me the earthen trough in which I had made all my experiments on air while I was there. It was such an one as is there commonly used for washing linen.

(104.) Having succeeded so well in the "History of Electricity," I was induced to undertake the history of all the branches of experimental philosophy; and at Leeds I gave out proposals for that purpose, and published the "History of Discoveries Relating to Vision, Light, and Colours." This work, also, I believe I executed to general satisfaction, and being an undertaking of great expense, I was under the necessity of publishing it by subscription. The sale, however, was not such as to encourage me to proceed with a work of so much labour and expense; so that after purchasing a great number of books, to enable me to finish my undertaking, I was obliged to abandon it, and to apply wholly to original experiments.

(105.) In writing the "History of Discoveries Relating to Vision," I was much assisted by Mr. Michell, the discoverer of the method of making artificial magnets. Living at Thornhill, not very far from Leeds, I frequently visited him, and was very happy in his society, as I also was in that of Mr. Smeaton, who lived still nearer to me. He made me a present of his excellent air-pump, which I constantly use to this day. Having strongly recommended his construction of this instrument, it is now generally used; whereas before that, hardly any had been made during the twenty years which had elapsed after the account that he had given of it in the "Philosophical Transactions."

(106.) I was also instrumental in reviving the use of large electrical machines, and batteries, in electricity, the generality of electrical machines being little more than playthings at

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the time that I began my experiments. The first very large electrical machine was made by Mr. Nairne, in consequence of a request made to me by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to get him the best machine that we could make in England. This, and another that he made for Mr. Vaughan, were constituted on a plan of my own. But afterwards Mr. Nairne made large machines on a more simple and improved construction; and in consideration of the service which I had rendered him, he made me a present of a pretty large machine of the same kind.

(107.) The review of my "History of Electricity," by Mr. Bewley, who was acquainted with Mr. Michell, was the means of opening a correspondence between us, which was the source of much satisfaction to me as long as he lived. I instantly communicated to him an account of every new experiment that I made, and, in return, was favoured with his remarks upon them. All that he published of his own were articles in the "Appendices" to my volumes on air, all of which are ingenious and valuable. Always publishing in this manner, he used to call himself my *satellite*. There was a vein of pleasant wit and humour in all his correspondence, which aided greatly to the value of it. His letters to me would have made several volumes, and mine to him still more. When he found himself dangerously ill, he made a point of paying me a visit before he died; and he made a journey from Norfolk to Birmingham, accompanied by Mrs. Bewley, for that purpose; and after spending about a week with me, he went to his friend, Dr. Burney, and at his house he died.

(108.) While I was at Leeds, a proposal was made to me to accompany Captain Cook in his second voyage to the South Seas. As the terms were very advantageous, I consented to

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it, and the heads of my congregation had agreed to keep an assistant to supply my place during my absence. But Mr. Banks* informed me that I was objected to by some clergymen in the Board of Longitude, who had the direction of this business, on account of my religious principles; and presently after I heard that Dr. Forster, a person far better qualified for the purpose, had got the appointment. As I had barely acquiesced in the proposal, this was no disappointment to me, and I was much better employed at home, even with respect to my philosophical pursuits. My knowledge of natural history was not sufficient for the undertaking; but at that time I should, by application, have been able to supply my deficiency, though now I am sensible I could not do it.

(109.) At Leeds I was particularly happy in my intercourse with Mr. Turner, of Wakefield, and occasionally with Mr. Cappe, of York, and Mr. Graham, of Halifax. And here it was that, in consequence of a visit which, in company with Mr. Turner, I made to the Archdeacon Blackburne,† at Richmond (with whom I had kept up a correspondence from the time that his son was under my care at Warrington), I first met with Mr. Lindsey, then of Catterick, and a correspondence and intimacy commenced, which has been the source of more real satisfaction to me than any other circumstance in my whole life. He soon discovered to me that he was uneasy in his situation, and had thoughts of quitting it. At first I was not forward to encourage him in it, but rather advised him to make what alteration he thought proper in

* Afterwards Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society. He had sailed with Captain Cook on his first voyage in 1768.

† Father-in-law of the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey.

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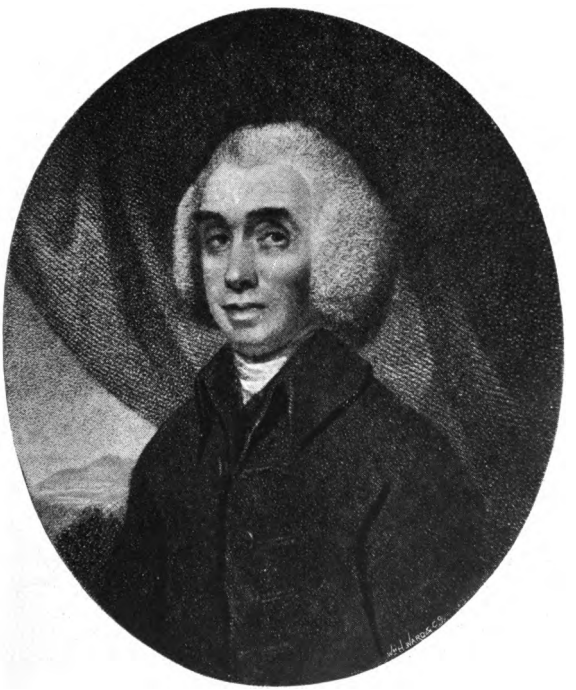
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† Father-in-law [illegible] Theophilus Lindsey.

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the offices of the church, and leave it to his superiors to dismiss him if they chose. But his better judgment and greater fortitude led him to give up all connection with the established church of his own accord.

(110.) This took place about the time of my leaving Leeds, and it was not until long after this that I was apprised of all the difficulties he had to struggle with before he could accomplish his purpose. But the opposition made to it by his nearest friends, and those who might have been expected to approve of the step that he took, and to have endeavoured to make it easy to him, was one of the greatest. Notwithstanding this, he left Catterick, where he had lived in affluence, idolised by his parish, and went to London without any certain prospect, where he lived in two rooms on a ground floor, until, by the assistance of his friends, he was able to pay for the use of the upper apartments, which the state of his health rendered necessary. In this humble situation have I passed some of the most pleasing hours of my life, when, in consequence of living with Lord Shelburne, I spent my winters in London.

(111.) On this occasion it was that my intimacy with Mr. Lindsey was much improved, and an entire concurrence in everything that we thought to be for the interest of Christianity, gave fresh warmth to our friendship. To his society I owe much of my zeal for the doctrine of the divine unity, for which he made so great sacrifices, and in the defence of which he so much distinguished himself, so as to occasion a new era in the history of religion in this country.

(112.) As we became more intimate, confiding in his better taste and judgment, and also in that of Mrs. Lindsey, a woman of the same spirit and views, and in all respects a help-meet for him, I never chose to publish anything of

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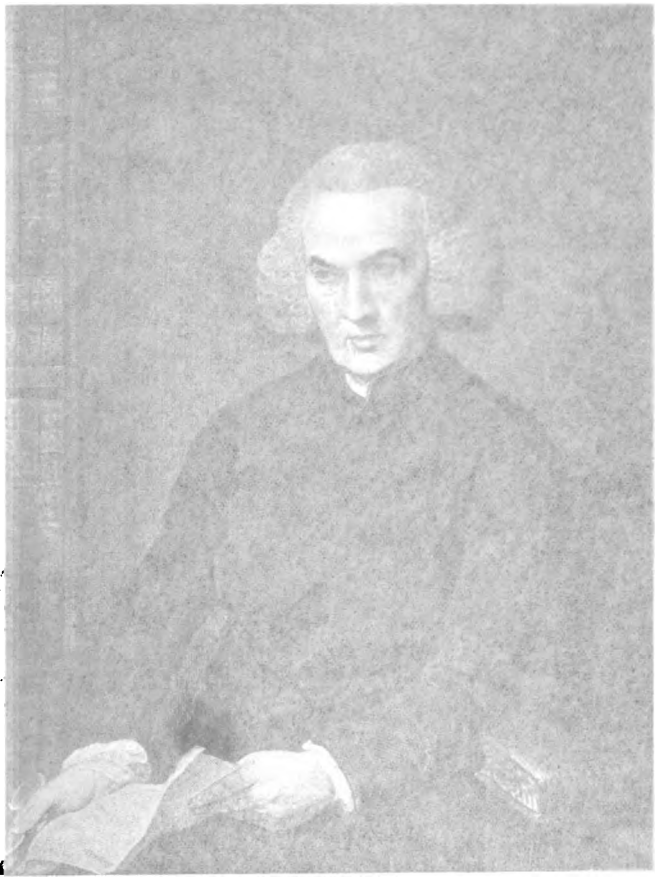
moment relating to theology without consulting him; and hardly ever ventured to insert anything that they disapproved, being sensible that my disposition led to precipitancy, to which their coolness was a seasonable check.

(113.) At Leeds began my intercourse with Mr. Lee,* of Lincoln's Inn. He was a native of the place, and exactly one week older than myself. At that time he was particularly connected with the congregation, and before he was married spent his vacations with us. His friendship was a source of much greater satisfaction and advantage to me after I came to reside in London, and especially at the time of my leaving Lord Shelburne, when my prospects wore rather a cloudy aspect.

(114.) When I visited London, during my residence at Leeds, commenced my particular friendship for Dr. Price, to whom I had been introduced several years before by Dr. Benson; our first interview having been at Mr. Brownsword's, at Newington, where they were members of a small literary society, in which they read various compositions. At that time Dr. Benson read a paper which afterwards made a section in his "Life of Christ." For the most amiable simplicity of character, equalled only by that of Mr. Lindsey, a truly Christian spirit, disinterested patriotism, and true candour, no man in my opinion ever exceeded Dr. Price. His candour will appear the more extraordinary, considering his warm attachments to the theological sentiments which he embraced in very early life. I shall ever reflect upon our friendship as a circumstance highly honourable, as it was a source of peculiar satisfaction to me.

* John Lee, the barrister, who so generously and ably employed his legal knowledge to overcome the opposition that was made to Lindsey's first services in Essex Street Chapel.

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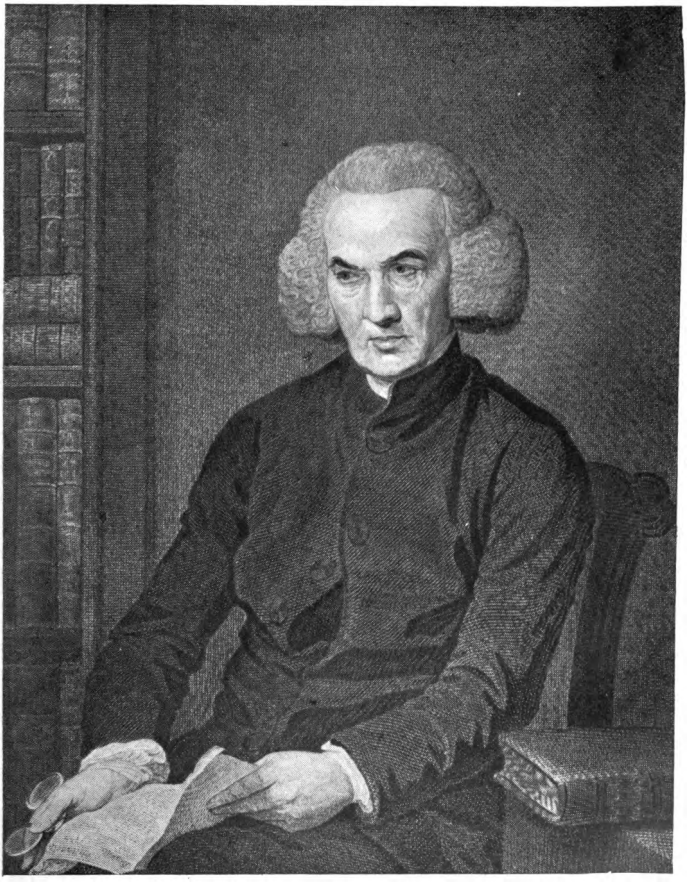
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(115.) I had two sons born to me at Leeds, Joseph and William, and though I was very happy there, I was tempted to leave it after continuing there six years, to go into the family of the Earl of Shelburne, now the Marquis of Lansdowne; he stipulating to give me two hundred and fifty pounds per annum, a house to live in, and a certainty for life in case of his death, or of my separation from him; whereas at Leeds my salary was only one hundred guineas per annum, and a house, which was not quite sufficient for the subsistence of my family, without a possibility of making a provision for them after my death.

(116.) I had been recommended to Lord Shelburne by Dr. Price, as a person qualified to be a literary companion to him. In this situation, my family being at Calne, in Wiltshire, near to his lordship's seat at Bowood, I continued seven years, spending the summer with my family, and a great part of the winter in his lordship's house in London. My office was nominally that of *librarian*, but I had little employment as such, besides arranging his books, taking a catalogue of them, and of his manuscripts, which were numerous, and making an index to his collection of private papers. In fact, I was with him as a friend, and the second year made with him the tour of Flanders, Holland, and Germany, as far as Strasburgh; and after spending a month at Paris, returned to England. This was in the year 1774.

(117.) This little excursion made me more sensible than I should otherwise have been of the benefit of foreign travel, even without the advantage of much conversation with foreigners. The very sight of new countries, new buildings, new customs, &c., and the very hearing of an unintelligible new language, gives new ideas, and tends to enlarge the mind. To me, this little time was extremely pleasing, especially

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as I saw everything to the greatest advantage, and without any anxiety or trouble, and had an opportunity of seeing and conversing with every person of eminence, wherever we came; the political characters by his lordship's connections, and the literary ones by my own. I was soon, however, tired of Paris, and chose to spend my evenings at the hotel, in company with a few literary friends. Fortunately for me, Mr. Magellan, being at Paris at the same time, spent most of the evenings with me; and as I chose to return before his lordship, he accompanied me to London, and made the journey very pleasing to me; he being used to the country, the language, and the manners of it, which I was not. He had seen much of the world, and his conversation during our journey was particularly interesting to me. Indeed, in London, both before and after this time, I always found him very friendly, especially in everything that related to my philosophical pursuits.

(118.) As I was sufficiently apprised of the fact, I did not wonder, as I otherwise should have done, to find all the philosophical persons to whom I was introduced at Paris, unbelievers in Christianity, and even professed atheists. As I chose on all occasions to appear as a Christian, I was told by some of them that I was the only person they had ever met with, of whose understanding they had any opinion, who professed to believe Christianity. But on interrogating them on the subject, I soon found that they had given no proper attention to it, and did not really know what Christianity was. This was also the case with a great part of the company that I saw at Lord Shelburne's. But I hope that my always avowing myself to be a Christian, and holding myself ready on all occasions to defend the genuine principles of it, was not without its use. Having conversed

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so much with unbelievers, at home and abroad, I thought I should be able to combat their prejudices with some advantage, and with this view I wrote, while I was with Lord Shelburne, the first part of my "Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever," in proof of the doctrine of a God and a providence, and to this I have added during my residence at Birmingham a second part, in defence of the evidences of Christianity. The first part being replied to by a person who called himself Mr. Hammon,* I wrote a reply to his piece, which has hitherto remained unanswered. I am happy to find that this work of mine has done some good, and I hope that in due time it will do more. I can truly say that the greatest satisfaction I receive from the success of my philosophical pursuits arises from the weight it may give to my attempts to defend Christianity, and to free it from those corruptions which prevent its reception with philosophical and thinking persons, whose influence with the vulgar and the unthinking is very great.

(119.) With Lord Shelburne I saw a great variety of characters; but, of our neighbours in Wiltshire, the person I had the most frequent opportunity of seeing was Dr. Frampton, a clergyman, whose history may serve as a lesson to many. No man, perhaps, was ever better qualified to please in a convivial hour, or had greater talents for conversation and repartee; in consequence of which, though there were several things very disgusting about him, his society was much courted, and many promises of preferment were made to him. To these, notwithstanding his knowledge of the world, and of high life, he gave too much credit; so

* The real writer was Dr. Turner, a physician at Liverpool, mentioned in paragraph 101.

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that he spared no expense to gratify his taste and appetite, until he was universally involved in debt; and though his friends made some efforts to relieve him, he was confined a year in the county prison at a time when his bodily infirmities required the greatest indulgences; and he obtained his release but a short time before his death, on condition of his living on a scanty allowance; the income of his livings (amounting to more than four hundred pounds per annum) being in the hands of his creditors. Such was the end of a man who kept the table in a roar.

(120.) Dr. Frampton being a high churchman, he could not at first conceal his aversion to me, and endeavoured to do me some ill offices. But being a man of letters, and despising the clergy in his neighbourhood, he became at last much attached to me; and in his distresses was satisfied, I believe, that I was one of his most sincere friends. With some great defects he had some considerable virtues, and uncommon abilities, which appeared more particularly in extempore speaking. He always preached without notes, and when, on some occasions, he composed his sermons, he could, if he chose to do it, repeat the whole *verbatim*. He frequently extemporised in verse, in a great variety of measures.

(121.) In Lord Shelburne's family was Lady Arabella Denny, who is well known by her extensive charities. She is (for she is still living) a woman of good understanding, and great piety. She had the care of his lordship's two sons, until they came under the care of Mr. Jervis, who was their tutor during my continuance in the family. His lordship's younger son, who died suddenly, had made astonishing attainments, both in knowledge and piety, while very young, far beyond anything that I had an opportunity of observing in my life.

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(122.) When I went to his lordship, I had materials for one volume of "Experiments on Air," which I soon after published, and inscribed to him; and before I left him, I published three volumes more, and had materials for a fourth, which I published immediately on my settling in Birmingham. He encouraged me in the prosecution of my philosophical enquiries, and allowed me forty pounds per annum for expenses of that kind, and was pleased to see me make experiments to entertain his guests, and especially foreigners.

(123.) Notwithstanding the attention that I gave to philosophy in this situation, I did not discontinue my other studies, especially in theology and metaphysics. Here I wrote my "Miscellaneous Observations relating to Education," and published my "Lectures on Oratory and Criticism," which I dedicated to Lord Fitzmaurice, Lord Shelburne's eldest son. Here also I published the third and last part of my "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion"; and having in the preface attacked the principles of Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie, and Dr. Oswald, with respect to their doctrine of *common sense*, which they made to supersede all rational inquiry into the subject of religion, I was led to consider their system in a separate work, which, though written in a manner that I do not entirely approve, has, I hope, upon the whole, been of service to the cause of free inquiry and truth.

(124.) In the preface, I had expressed my belief in the *doctrine of Philosophical Necessity*, but without any design to pursue the subject, and also my great admiration of Dr. Hartley's theory of the human mind, as indeed, I had taken many opportunities of doing before. This led me to publish that part of his "Observations on Man" which related to the doctrine of association of ideas, detached from the doctrine of vibrations, prefixing "Three Dissertations,"

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explanatory of his general system. In one of these I expressed some doubt of the immateriality of the sentient principle in man; and the outcry that was made on what I casually expressed on that subject can hardly be imagined. In all the newspapers, and most of the periodical publications, I was represented as an unbeliever in revelation, and no better than an Atheist.

(125.) This led me to give the closest attention to the subject, and the consequence was the firmest persuasion that man is wholly material, and that our only prospect of immortality is from the Christian doctrine of a resurrection. I therefore digested my thoughts on the subject, and published my "Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit"; also the subjects of "Socinianism" and "Necessity" being nearly connected with the doctrine of the materiality of man, I advanced several considerations from the state of opinions in ancient times in favour of the former; and in a separate volume discussed more at large what related to the latter, dedicating the first volume of this work to Mr. Graham, and the second to Dr. Jebb.

(126.) It being probable that this publication would be unpopular, and might be a means of bringing odium on my patron, several attempts were made by his friends, though none by himself, to dissuade me from persisting in it. But being, as I thought, engaged in the cause of important truth, I proceeded without regard to any consequences, assuring them that this publication should not be injurious to his lordship.

(127.) In order, however, to proceed with the greatest caution in a business of such moment, I desired some of my learned friends, and especially Dr. Price, to peruse the work before it was published; and the remarks that he made upon

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it led to a free and friendly discussion of the several subjects of it, which we afterwards published jointly; and it remains a proof of the possibility of discussing subjects mutually considered as of the greatest importance, with the most perfect good temper, and without the least diminution of friendship. This work I dedicated to our common friend Mr. Lee.

(128.) In this situation I published my "Harmony of the Gospels," on the idea of the public ministry of Jesus having continued little more than one year, a scheme which I first proposed in the "Theological Repository"; and the Bishop of Waterford having in his "Harmony" published a defence of the common hypothesis, viz., that of its having been three years, I addressed a *letter to him* on the subject, and to this he made a reply in a separate work. The controversy proceeded to several publications on both sides, in the most amicable manner, and the last "Postscript" was published jointly by us both. Though my side of the question was without any advocates that I know of, and had only been adopted by Mr. Mann, who seemed to have had no followers, there are few persons, I believe, who have attended to our discussion of the subject, who are not satisfied that I have sufficiently proved what I had advanced. This controversy was not finished until after my removal to Birmingham.

(129.) Reflecting on the time that I spent with Lord Shelburne, being as a guest in the family, I can truly say that I was not at all fascinated with that mode of life. Instead of looking back upon it with regret, one of the greatest subjects of my present thankfulness is the change of that situation for the one in which I am now placed; and yet I was far from being unhappy there, much less so than those who are born to such a state, and pass all their lives in

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it. These are generally unhappy from the want of *necessary* employment; on which account chiefly there appears to be much more happiness in the middle classes of life, who are above the fear of want, and yet have a sufficient motive for a constant exertion of their faculties; and who have always some other object besides amusement.

(130.) I used to make no scruple of maintaining that there is not only most virtue and most happiness, but even most true politeness, in the middle classes of life. For in proportion as men pass more of their time in the society of their equals, they get a better established habit of governing their tempers; they attend more to the feelings of others, and are more disposed to accommodate themselves to them. On the other hand, the passions of persons in higher life, having been less controlled, are more apt to be inflamed; the idea of their rank and superiority to others seldom quits them; and though they are in the habit of concealing their feelings, and disguising their passions, it is not always so well done but that persons of ordinary discernment may perceive what they inwardly suffer. On this account they are really entitled to compassion, it being the almost unavoidable consequence of their education and mode of life. But when the mind is not hurt in such a situation, when a person born to affluence can lose sight of himself, and truly feel and act for others, the character is so godlike, as shows that this inequality of condition is not without its use. Like the general discipline of life, it is for the present lost on the great mass, but on a few it produces what no other state of things could do.

(131.) The greatest part of the time that I spent with Lord Shelburne, I passed with much satisfaction, his lordship always behaving to me with uniform politeness, and his

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guests with respect. But about two years before I left him, I perceived evident marks of dissatisfaction, though I never understood the cause of it; and until that time he had been even lavish on all occasions in expressing his satisfaction in my society, to our common friends. When I left him, I asked him whether he had any fault to find with my conduct, and he said *none*.

(132.) At length, however, he intimated to Dr. Price that he wished to give me an establishment in Ireland, where he had large property. This gave me an opportunity of acquainting him that if he chose to dissolve the connection, it should be on the terms expressed in the writings, which we mutually signed when it was formed, in consequence of which I should be entitled to an annuity of an hundred and fifty pounds, and then I would provide for myself, and to this he readily acceded. He told Dr. Price that he wished our separation to be amicable, and I assured him that nothing should be wanting on my part to make it truly so. Accordingly, I expected that he would receive my visits when I should be occasionally in London, but he declined them.

(133.) However, when I had been some years settled at Birmingham, he sent an especial messenger, and common friend, to engage me again in his service, having, as that friend assured me, a deep sense of the loss of Lord Ashburton (Mr. Dunning) by death, and of Colonel Barre, by his becoming almost blind, and his want of some able and faithful friend, such as he had experienced in me; with other expressions more flattering than those. I did not choose, however, on any consideration, to leave the very eligible situation in which I now am, but expressed my readiness to do him any service in my power. His lordship's enemies

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have insinuated that he was not punctual in the payment of my annuity; but the contrary is true: hitherto nothing could have been more punctual, and I have no reason to suppose that it will ever be otherwise.

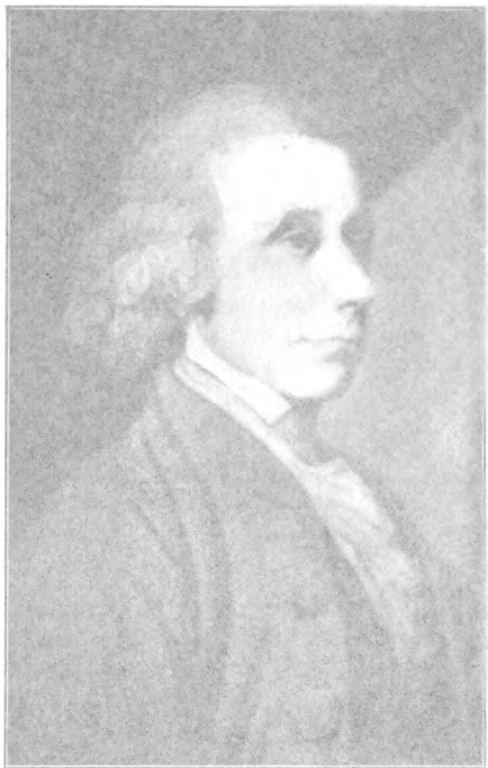
(134.) At Calne I had another son born to me, whom, at Lord Shelburne's request, I called Henry.

(135.) It was at the time of my leaving Lord Shelburne that I found the great value of Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey's friendship, in such a manner as I certainly had no expectation of when our acquaintance commenced, especially by their introducing me to the notice of Mrs. Rayner, one of his hearers and most zealous friends.

(136.) Notwithstanding my allowance from Lord Shelburne was much larger than that which I had at Leeds, yet, my family growing up, and my expenses, on this and other accounts, increasing more than in proportion, I was barely able to support my removal. But my situation being intimated to Mrs. Rayner, besides smaller sums with which she occasionally assisted me, she gave me an hundred guineas to defray the expense of my removal, and deposited with Mrs. Lindsey, which she soon after gave up to me, four hundred guineas, and to this day has never failed giving me every year marks of her friendship. Hers is, indeed, I seriously think, one of the first Christian characters that I was ever acquainted with, having a cultivated comprehensive mind equal to any subject of theology or metaphysics, intrepid in the cause of truth, and most rationally pious.

(137.) Spending so much of my time in London was the means of increasing my intimacy with both Mr. Lindsey and Mr. Lee, our common friend, who, amidst the bustle of politics, always preserved his attachment to theology and the cause of truth. The Sunday I always spent with Mr.

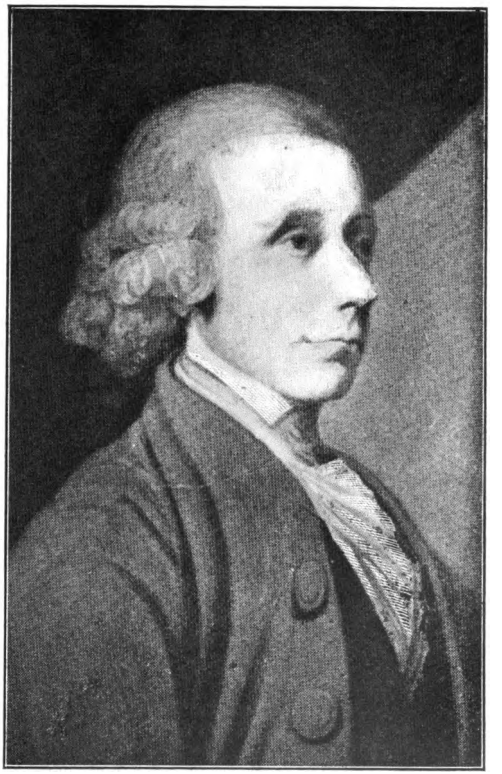
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Lindsey, attending the service of his chapel, and sometimes officiating for him, and with him and Mrs. Lindsey I generally spent the evening of that day at Mr. Lee's, who then admitted no other company, and seldom have I enjoyed society with more relish.

(138.) My winter's residence in London was the means of improving my acquaintance with Dr. Franklin. I was seldom many days without seeing him, and, being members of the same club, we constantly returned together. The difference with America breaking out at this time, our conversation was chiefly of a political nature, and I can bear witness that he was so far from promoting, as was generally supposed, that he took every method in his power to prevent a rupture between the two countries. He urged so much the doctrine of forbearance that, for some time, he was unpopular with the Americans on that account, as too much a friend to Great Britain. His advice to them was to bear everything for the present, as they were sure in time to out-grow all their grievances, as it could not be in the power of the mother country to oppress them long.

(139.) He dreaded the war, and often said that, if the difference should come to an open rupture, it would be a war of *ten years*, and he should not live to see the end of it. In reality the war lasted nearly eight years, but he did live to see the happy termination of it. That the issue would be favourable to America he never doubted. The English, he used to say, may take all our great towns, but that will not give them possession of the country. The last day that he spent in England, having given out that he should leave London the day before, we passed together, without any other company; and much of the time was employed in reading American newspapers, especially accounts of the reception which

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"Boston Port Bill" met with in America; and as he read the addresses to the inhabitants of Boston, from the places in the neighbourhood, the tears trickled down his cheeks.

(140.) It is much to be lamented, that a man of Dr. Franklin's general good character, and great influence, should have been an unbeliever in Christianity, and also have done so much as he did to make others unbelievers. To me, however, he acknowledged that he had not given so much attention as he ought to have done to the evidences of Christianity, and desired me to recommend to him a few treatises on the subject, such as I thought most deserving of his notice, but not of great length, promising to read them, and give me his sentiments on them. Accordingly, I recommended to him Hartley's Evidences of Christianity in his observations on man, and what I had then written on the subject in my "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion." But the American war breaking out soon after, I do not believe that he ever found himself sufficiently at leisure for the discussion. I have kept up a correspondence with him occasionally, ever since; and three of his letters to me were, with his consent, published in his miscellaneous works, in quarto. The first of them, written immediately on his landing in America, is very striking.

(141.) About three years before the dissolution of my connexion with Lord Shelburne, Dr. Fothergill, with whom I had always lived on terms of much intimacy, having observed, as he said, that many of my experiments had not been carried to their proper extent on account of the expense that would have attended them, proposed to me a subscription from himself and some of his friends, to supply me with whatever sums I should want for that purpose, and named a

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hundred pounds per annum. This large subscription I declined, lest the discovery of it (by the use I should, of course, make of it) should give umbrage to Lord Shelburne, but I consented to accept of forty pounds per annum, which from that time he regularly paid me, from the contribution of himself, Sir Theodore Jansen, Mr. Constable, and Sir George Saville.

(142.) On my leaving Lord Shelburne, which was attended with the loss of one-half of my income, Dr. Fothergill proposed an enlargement of my allowance for my experiments, and likewise for my maintenance, without being under the necessity of giving my time to pupils, which I must otherwise have done. And, considering the generosity with which this voluntary offer was made by persons who could well afford it, and who thought me qualified to serve the interests of science, I thought it right to accept of it; and I preferred it to any pension from the Court, offers of which were more than once made by persons who thought they could have procured one for me.

(143.) As it was my wish to do what might be in my power to show my gratitude to my friends and benefactors that suggested the idea of writing these Memoirs, I shall subjoin a list of their names. Some of the subscriptions were made with a view to defray the expense of my experiments only; but the greater part of the subscribers were persons who were equally friends to my theological studies.

(144.) The persons who made me this regular annual allowance were Dr. Watson and his son, Mr. Wedgwood,* Mr. Moseley, Mr. S. Salte, Mr. Jeffries, Mr. Radcliffe, Mr.

* Josiah Wedgwood, of Staffordshire, the distinguished improver of the English pottery manufacture.

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Remington, Mr. Strutt, of Derby; Mr. Shore,* Mr. Reynolds, of Paxton; Messrs. Galton, father† and son, and the Rev. Mr. Simpson.

(145.) Besides the persons whose names appear in this list, as regular subscribers, there were other persons who, without choosing to be known as such, contributed no less to my support, and some considerably more.

(146.) My chief benefactress was Mrs. Rayner,‡ and next to her Mr. Heberden, equally distinguished for his love of religious truth, and his zeal to promote science. Such also is the character of Mr. Tayleur, of Shrewsbury, who has at different times remitted me considerable sums, chiefly to defray the expenses incurred by my theological inquiries and publications.

(147.) Mr. Parker, of Fleet Street, very generously supplied me with every instrument that I wanted in glass, particularly a capital burning lens, sixteen inches in diameter. All his benefactions in this way would have amounted to a considerable sum. Mr. Wedgwood also, besides his annual benefaction, supplied me with everything that I wanted made of pottery, such as retorts, tubes, &c., which the account of my experiments will show to have been of great use to me.

(148.) On my removal to Birmingham [in December, 1780],

* Samuel Shore of Norton Hall, whose name ranks high among the advocates of civil and religious liberty.

† Samuel Galton, the Quaker, father of the gifted Mrs. Schimmelpenninck. His wife was one of Mrs. Priestley's most intimate friends.

‡ Mrs. Elizabeth Rayner, whose epitaph may be seen on one side of Lindsey's vault in Bunhill Fields cemetery, mentioning her kinship to the noble family of Percy, and saying that she "esteemed it a still greater honour to be the friend and fellow-worshipper of Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey."

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commenced my intimacy with Mr. William Russell, whose public spirit, and zeal in every good cause, can hardly be exceeded. My obligations to him were various and constant, so as not to be estimated by sums of money. At his proposal, I doubt not, some of the heads of the congregation made me a present of two hundred pounds, to assist me in my theological publications.

(149.) Mr. Lee showed himself particularly my friend at the time that I left Lord Shelburne, assisting me in the difficulties with which I was then pressed, and continuing to befriend me afterwards by seasonable benefactions. By him it was hinted to me during the administration of Lord Rockingham, with whom he had great influence, that I might have a pension from the Government, to assist in defraying the expense of my experiments. Another hint of the same kind was given me in the beginning of Mr. Pitt's administration, by a bishop, in whose power it was to have procured it from him. But in both cases I declined the overture, wishing to preserve myself independent of everything connected with the Court, and preferring the assistance of generous and opulent individuals, lovers of science, and also lovers of liberty. Without assistance I could not have carried on my experiments except on a very small scale, and under great disadvantages.

(150.) Mr. Galton, before I had any opportunity of being personally acquainted with him, had, on the death of Dr. Fothergill, taken up his subscription. His son did the same, and the friendship of the latter has added much to the happiness of my situation here [Birmingham]. Seldom, if ever, have I known two persons of such cultivated minds, pleasing manners, and liberal dispositions as he and Mrs. Galton. The latter had the greatest attachment imaginable to my wife.

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(151.) Mr. Salte was zealous in promoting the subscriptions to my experiments, and moreover proposed to take one of my sons as an apprentice, without any fee. But my brother-in-law making the same offer, I gave it the preference. Mr. Wedgwood, who has distinguished himself by his application to philosophical pursuits, as well as by his great success in the improvements of his manufactory, was very zealous to serve me, and urged me to accept of a much larger allowance than I chose.

(152.) The favours that I received from my two brothers-in-law deserve my most grateful acknowledgments. They acted the part of kind and generous relations, especially at the time when I most wanted assistance. It was in consequence of Mr. John Wilkinson's proposal, who wished to have us nearer to him, that, being undetermined where to settle, I fixed upon Birmingham, where he soon provided a house for me.

(153.) My apology for accepting of these large benefactions is that, besides the great expense of my philosophical and even my theological studies, and the education of three sons and a daughter, the reputation I had, justly or unjustly, acquired brought on me a train of expenses not easy to describe, to avoid, or to estimate; so that without so much as keeping a horse (which the kindness of Mr. Russell made unnecessary), the expense of housekeeping, &c., was more than double the amount of any regular income that I had.

(154.) I consider my settlement at Birmingham as the happiest event in my life, being highly favourable to every object I had in view, philosophical or theological. In the former respect, I had the convenience of good workmen of every kind, and the society of persons eminent for their

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knowledge of chemistry, particularly Mr. Watt,* Mr. Keir, and Dr. Withering.† These, with Mr. Boulton, and Dr. Darwin,‡ who soon left us, by removing from Lichfield to Derby, Mr. Galton, and afterwards Mr. Johnson, of Kenilworth, and myself, dined together every month, calling ourselves the *Lunar Society*, because the time of our meeting was near the full moon.

(155.) With respect to theology, I had the society of Mr. Hawkes,§ Mr. Blyth, and Mr. Scholefield,‖ and his assistant Mr. Coates, and, while he lived, Mr. Palmer, before of Macclesfield. We met and drank tea together every fortnight. At this meeting we read all the papers that were sent for the "Theological Repository," which I revived some time after my coming hither, and in general our conversation was of the same cast as that with my fellow-tutors at Warrington.

(156.) Within a quarter of a year of my coming to reside at Birmingham, Mr. Hawkes resigned, and I had an unanimous invitation to succeed him as colleague with Mr. Blyth, a man of a truly Christian temper. The congregation we serve is the most liberal, I believe, of any in England, and to this freedom the unwearied labours of Mr. Bourne had eminently contributed.

* James Watt, distinguished in the history of the invention of the modern steam engine. He was partner in this business with Matthew Boulton mentioned here.

† William Withering, physician, and author of several important works on British plants.

‡ Erasmus Darwin, physician, author of a fanciful poem called the "Botanic Garden."

§ Together with Mr. Blyth, minister of the New Meeting Congregation, Birmingham, to which Priestley was presently appointed.

‖ Rev. Radcliffe Scholefield, minister of the Old Meeting, Birmingham.

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(157.) With this congregation I greatly improved my plan of catechizing and lecturing, and my classes have been well attended. I have also introduced the custom of expounding the Scriptures as I read them, which I had never done before, but which I would earnestly recommend to all ministers. My time being much taken up with my philosophical and other studies, I agreed with the congregation to leave the business of baptizing and visiting the sick to Mr. Blyth, and to confine my services to the Sundays. I have been minister here between seven and eight years without any interruption of my happiness, and for this I am sensible I am in a great measure indebted to the friendship of Mr. Russell.

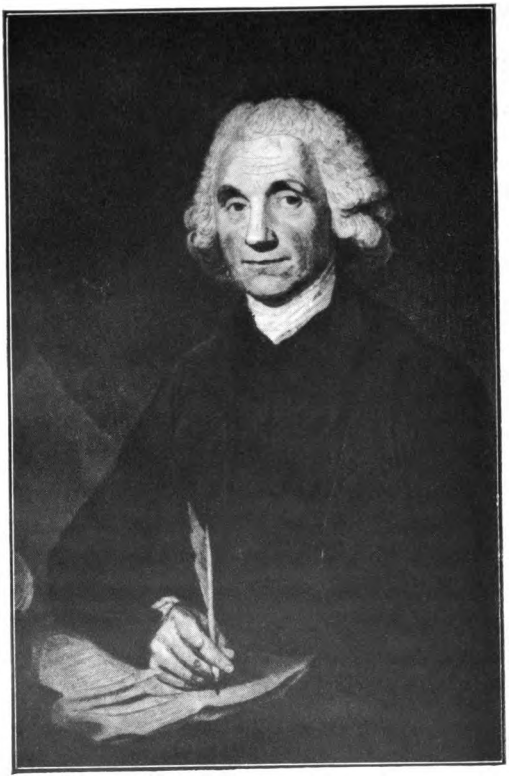
(158.) Here I have never long intermitted my philosophical pursuits, and I have published two volumes of experiments, besides communications to the Royal Society.

(159.) In theology I have completed my friendly controversy with the Bishop of Waterford on the duration of Christ's ministry; I have published a variety of single sermons, which, with the addition of a few others, I have lately collected and published in one volume; and I am now engaged in a controversy of great extent, and which promises to be of considerable consequence, relating to the person of Christ.

(160.) This was occasioned by my "History of the Corruptions of Christianity," which I composed and published presently after my settlement at Birmingham, the first section of which being rudely attacked in the "Monthly Review," then by Dr. Horsley, and afterwards by Mr. Howes, and other particular opponents, I undertook to collect from the original writers the state of opinions on the subject in the age succeeding that of the apostles, and I have published the result of my investigation in my "History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ," in four volumes octavo. This work

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has brought me more antagonists, and I now write a pamphlet annually in defence of the Unitarian doctrine against all my opponents.

(161.) My only Arian antagonist is Dr. Price, with whom the discussion of the question has proceeded with perfect amity. But no Arian has as yet appeared upon the ground to which I wish to confine the controversy, viz., the state of opinions in the primitive times, as one means of collecting what was the doctrine of the apostles and the true sense of Scripture on the subject.

(162.) Some years ago I resumed the "Theological Repository," in which I first advanced my objections to the doctrine of the miraculous conception of Jesus, and his natural fallibility and peccability. These opinions gave at first great alarm, even to my best friends, but that is now, in a great measure, subsided. For want of sufficient sale, I shall be obliged to discontinue this "Repository" for some time.

(163.) At present I thank God I can say that my prospects are better than they have ever been before, and my own health, and that of my wife, better established, and my hopes as to the dispositions and future settlement of my children satisfactory.

(164.) I shall now close this account of myself with some observations of a general nature, but chiefly an account of those circumstances for which I have more particular reason to be thankful to that good Being who has brought me hitherto, and to whom I trust I habitually ascribe whatever my partial friends think the world indebted to me for.

(165.) Not to enlarge again on what has been mentioned already on the fundamental blessings of a religious and liberal education, I have particular reason to be thankful for a happy temperament of body and mind, both derived from my parents.

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My father, grandmother, and several branches of my family, were remarkably healthy and long lived, and, though my constitution has been far from robust, and was much injured by a consumptive tendency, or rather an ulcer in my lungs, the consequence of improper conduct of myself when I was at school (being often violently heated with exercise, and as often imprudently chilled by bathing, &c.), from which, with great difficulty, I recovered, it has been excellently adapted to that studious life which has fallen to my lot.

(166.) I have never been subject to headaches or any other complaints that are peculiarly unfavourable to study. I have never found myself less disposed or less qualified for mental exertions of any kind at one time of the day more than another, but all seasons have been equal to me, early or late, before dinner or after, &c. And so far have I been from suffering by my application to study (which, however, has never been so close or intense as some have imagined), that I have found my health improving from the age of eighteen to the present time, and never have I found myself more free from any disorder than at present; I must, however, except a short time preceding and following my leaving Lord Shelburne, when I laboured under a bilious complaint, in which I was troubled with gall stones, which sometimes gave me exquisite pain. But by confining myself to a vegetable diet I perfectly recovered, and I have now been so long free from the disorder that I am under no apprehension of its return.

(167.) It has been a singular happiness to me, and a proof, I believe, of a radically good constitution, that I have always slept well, and have awaked with my faculties perfectly vigorous, without any disposition to drowsiness. Also, whenever I have been fatigued with any kind of exertion, I could

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at any time sit down and sleep, and whatever cause of anxiety I may have had, I have almost always lost sight of it when I have got to bed, and I have generally fallen asleep as soon as I have been warm.*

(168.) I even think it an advantage to me, and am truly thankful for it, that my health received the check that it did when I was young, since a muscular habit from high health and strong spirits are not, I think, in general accompanied with that sensibility of mind which is both favourable to piety and to speculative pursuits.†

(169.) To a fundamentally good constitution of body, and the Being who gave it me, I owe an even cheerfulness of temper, which has had but few interruptions. This I inherit from my father, who had uniformly better spirits than any man that I ever knew, and by this means was as happy towards the close of life, when reduced to poverty and dependent upon others, as in his best days, and who, I am confident, would not have been unhappy, as I have frequently heard him say, in a workhouse.

(170.) Though my readers will easily suppose that, in the course of a life so full of vicissitude as mine has been, many things must have occurred to mortify and discompose me, nothing has ever depressed my mind beyond a very short period. My spirits have never failed to recover their natural

* My father was an early riser. He never slept more than six hours. He said he did not remember having lost a whole night's sleep but once, though, when awake, he often had to suffer much from pain and sickness, as well as from other circumstances of a very afflictive nature. —J. P.

† Though not a muscular man, he went through great exertion at various times of his life with activity. He walked very firmly and expeditiously.—J. P.

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level, and I have frequently observed, and at first with some surprise, that the most perfect satisfaction I have ever felt has been a day or two after an event that afflicted me the most, and without any change having taken place in the state of things. Having found this to be the case after many of my troubles, the persuasion that it *would* be so, after a new cause of uneasiness, has never failed to lessen the effect of its first impression, and together with my firm belief in the doctrine of necessity (and consequently that of everything being ordered for the best) has contributed to that degree of composure which I have enjoyed through life, so that I have always considered myself as one of the happiest of men.

(171.) When I was a young author (though I did not publish anything until I was about thirty), strictures on my writings gave me some disturbance, though I believe even then less than they do most others; but after some time, things of that kind hardly affected me at all, and on this account I may be said to have been well formed for public controversy.* But what has always made me easy in any controversy in which I have been engaged, has been my fixed resolution frankly to acknowledge any mistake that I might perceive I had fallen into. That I have never been in the least backward to do this in matters of philosophy, can never be denied.

(172.) As I have not failed to attend to the phenomena of

* Though Dr. Priestley has been considered as fond of controversy, and that his chief delight consisted in it, yet it is far from being true. He was more frequently the defendant than the assailant. His controversies, as far as it depended upon himself, were carried on with temper and decency. He was never malicious, nor even sarcastic, or indignant, unless provoked.—T. C.

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my own mind, as well as to those of other parts of nature, I have not been insensible of some great defects, as well as some advantages, attending its constitution; having from an early period been subject to a most humbling failure of recollection, so that I have sometimes lost all ideas of both persons and things that I have been conversant with. I have so completely forgotten what I have myself published, that in reading my own writings, what I find in them often appears perfectly new to me, and I have more than once made experiments, the results of which had been published by me.

(173.) I shall particularly mention one fact of this kind, as it alarmed me much at the time, as a symptom of all my mental powers totally failing me, until I was relieved by the recollection of things of a similar nature having happened to me before. When I was composing the "Dissertations," which are prefixed to my "Harmony of the Gospels," I had to ascertain something which had been the subject of much discussion, relating to the Jewish Passover (I have now forgotten what it was), and for that purpose had to consult and compare several writers. This I accordingly did, and digested the result in a compass of a few paragraphs, which I wrote in shorthand. But having mislaid the paper, and my attention having been drawn off to other things, in the space of a fortnight I did the same thing over again; and should never have discovered that I had done it twice, if, after the second paper was transcribed for the press, I had not accidentally found the former, which I viewed with a degree of terror.

(174.) Apprised of this defect, I never fail to note down, as soon as possible, everything that I wish not to forget. The same failing has led me to devise, and have recourse to,

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a variety of mechanical expedients to secure and arrange my thoughts, which have been of the greatest use to me in the composition of large and complex works; and what has excited the wonder of some of my readers would only have made them smile if they had seen me at work. But by simple and mechanical methods, one man shall do that in a month which shall cost another, of equal ability, whole years to execute. This methodical arrangement of a large work is greatly facilitated by mechanical methods, and nothing contributes more to the perspicuity of a large work than a good arrangement of its parts.

(175.) What I have known with respect to myself has tended much to lessen both my admiration and my contempt of others. Could we have entered into the mind of Sir Isaac Newton, and have traced all the steps by which he produced his great works, we might see nothing very extraordinary in the process. And great powers with respect to some things are generally attended with great defects in others; and these may not appear in a man's writings. For this reason it seldom happens but that our admiration of philosophers and writers is lessened by a personal knowledge of them.

(176.) As great excellences are often balanced by great, though not apparent defects, so great and apparent defects are often accompanied by great, though not apparent excellences. Thus my defect in point of recollection, which may be owing to a want of sufficient coherence in the association of ideas formerly impressed, may arise from a mental constitution more favourable to new associations; so that what I have lost with respect to memory may have been compensated by what is called invention, or new and original combinations of ideas. This is a subject that deserves

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attention, as well as everything else that relates to the affections of the mind.

(177.) Though I have often composed much in a little time, it by no means follows that I could have done much in a given time. For whenever I have done much business in a short time, it has always been with the idea of having time more than sufficient to do it in; so that I have always felt myself at ease, and I could have done nothing, as many can, if I had been hurried.

(178.) Knowing the necessity of this state of my mind to the despatch of business, I have never put off anything to the last moment; and instead of doing that on the morrow which ought to be done to-day, I have often blamed myself for doing to-day what had better have been put off until to-morrow; precipitancy being more my fault than procrastination.

(179.) It has been a great advantage to me that I have never been under the necessity of retiring from company in order to compose anything. Being fond of domestic life, I got a habit of writing on any subject by the parlour fire, with my wife and children about me, and occasionally talking to them, without experiencing any inconvenience from such interruptions. Nothing but reading, or speaking without interruption, has been any obstruction to me. For I could not help attending (as some can) when others spoke in my hearing. These are useful habits, which studious persons in general might acquire, if they would; and many persons greatly distress themselves, and others, by the idea that they can do nothing except in perfect solitude or silence.

(180.) Another great subject of my thankfulness to a good providence is my perfect freedom from any embarrassment in my circumstances, so that, without any anxiety on the subject, my supplies have always been equal to my wants;

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and now that my expenses are increased to a degree that I had no conception of some years ago, I am a richer man than I was, and without laying myself out for the purpose. What is more, this indifference about an increase of fortune has been the means of attaining it. When I began my experiments, I expended on them all the money I could possibly raise, carried on by my ardour in philosophical investigations, and entirely regardless of consequences, except so far as never to contract any debt; and if this had been without success, my imprudence would have been manifest. But having succeeded, I was in time more than indemnified for all that I had expended.

(181.) My theological studies, especially those which made it necessary for me to consult the Christian fathers, &c., have also been expensive to me. But I have found my theological friends even more liberal than my philosophical ones, and all beyond my expectations.

(182.) In reflecting on my past life, I have often thought of two sayings of Jacob. When he had lost one of his sons, and thought of other things that were afflictions to him, he said, "All these things are against me," at the same time that they were in reality making for him. So the impediment in my speech, and the difficulties of my situation at Needham, I now see as much cause to be thankful for, as for the most brilliant scenes in my life.

(183.) I have also applied to myself what Jacob said on his return from Padan Aram: "With my staff I went over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands"; when I consider how little I carried with me to Needham and Nantwich, how much more I had to carry to Warrington, how much more still to Leeds, how much more than that to Calne, and then to Birmingham.

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(184.) Yet, frequently as I have changed my situation, and always for the better, I can truly say that I never wished for any change on my own account. I should have been contented even at Needham, if I could have been unmolested, and had bare necessaries. This freedom from anxiety was remarkable in my father, and, therefore, is in a manner hereditary to me; but it has been much increased by reflection; having frequently observed, especially with respect to Christian ministers, how often it has contributed to embitter their lives, without being of any use to them. Some attention to the improvement of a man's circumstances is, no doubt, right, because no man can tell what occasion he may have for money, especially if he have children, and therefore I do not recommend my example to others. But I am thankful to that good providence which always took more care of me than ever I took of myself.

(185.) Hitherto I have had great reason to be thankful with respect to my children, as they have a prospect of enjoying a good share of health, and a sufficient capacity for performing the duties of their stations. They have also good dispositions, and, as much as could be expected at their age, a sense of religion. But as I hope they will live to see this work, I say the less on this subject, and I hope they will consider what I say in their favour as an incitement to exert themselves to act a Christian and useful part in life; that the care that I and their mother have taken of their instruction may not be lost upon them, and that may secure a happy meeting with us in a better world.

(186.) I esteem it a singular happiness to have lived in an age and country in which I have been at full liberty both to investigate, and by preaching and writing to propagate, religious truth; that though the freedom I have used for

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this purpose was for some time disadvantageous to me, it was not long so, and that my present situation is such that I can with the greatest openness urge whatever appears to me to be the truth of the gospel, not only without giving the least offence, but with the entire approbation of those with whom I am particularly connected.

(187.) As to the dislike which I have drawn upon myself by my writings, whether that of the Calvinistic party, in or out of the church of England, those who rank with rational Dissenters (but who have been exceedingly offended at my carrying my inquiries further than they wished any person to do), or whether they be unbelievers, I am thankful that it gives less disturbance to me than it does to themselves; and that their dislike is much more than compensated by the cordial esteem and approbation of my conduct by a few whose minds are congenial to my own, and especially that the number of such persons increases.

Birmingham, 1787.

At this period in Dr. Priestley's career, the disgraceful Church and King riots of 1791 took place at Birmingham. Priestley alluded to it in the continuation that he wrote to his Memoirs, as will be seen, and refers his readers to his two "Appeals to the Public" and to his "Fast Sermon" for further particulars. Some extracts from these last are given by his son in the conclusion that he has subjoined to his father's Memoirs. But none of these writings give us any sufficient view of the extent or of the iniquity of the affair, which lasted three days, and included the burning of

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three Meeting Houses, and a dozen private houses, with several others stripped and plundered.

Therefore the following account of the riots, drawn up by Mrs. Catharine Hutton Beale, is reprinted here by her permission from a volume entitled "Reminiscences of a Gentlewoman of the Last Century, Letters of Catharine Hutton." It may serve both to fill the gap between the two parts of these Memoirs, and to explain the slight allusions to this great misfortune which are made by Dr. Priestley himself.

THE CHURCH AND KING RIOTS OF BIRMINGHAM IN 1791.

Living as we do now in tolerant and peaceful times, we can scarcely believe that such events could have taken place. The Church and King Riots of 1791 will ever form a blot in the history of our town, and a sad page in the history of our country. These riots shocked Europe as being an outburst of religious bigotry and intolerance, chiefly directed against the Unitarians.

Several causes led to them, among which were the following. The Old Library—now in Union Street—was founded in 1779. Some of the members of it attempted to introduce Dr. Priestley's polemical works, to which the Clergy of the Established Church were averse; hence arose two parties, and, as a natural consequence, animosity in both.

Another cause was an attempt on the part of the Nonconformists to procure a repeal of the Test Act, which Act

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prevented conscientious Nonconformists from becoming justices of the peace, owing to their having to take the Sacrament according to the form of the Established Church before becoming magistrates. This Act was not repealed until May 9th, 1828. Certain matters of controversy supplied another cause. Some uncharitable expressions which fell from the episcopal pulpits involved Dr. Priestley in a dispute with the clergy. To dispute with the doctor was deemed the road to preferment. "He had already made two bishops, and there were still several heads that wanted mitres."

Another circumstance which gave great offence to the Church party was the celebration of the anniversary of the taking of the Bastile by a public dinner at the hotel. Fortunately, Dr. Priestley and William Hutton were not at the dinner. A powerful element of destruction is to be found in all large towns in the shape of a mob, who care nothing for principles, only for plunder. The leaders of the mob in these riots, shame to say, were the justices of the town, who ought to have known better.

The riots began on the 14th of July by breaking the windows of the hotel, when some one in the crowd cried out, "Go and burn the Meetings!" The mob marched down Bull Street, and in half an hour the New Meeting was in a blaze. At this point it is thought the magistrates would have stopped the riots had they been able. The Old Meeting was the next building burnt down. This was followed by Dr. Priestley's house, about a mile from Birmingham, which was plundered and burnt without mercy. The destruction of Dr. Priestley library, philosophical apparatus, and his invaluable manuscripts, which could never be replaced, may be considered a national loss.

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On the 15th, a mob of about a thousand persons attacked the house of John Ryland, Esq., at Easy Hill—now Easy Row—which was then quite in the country. Here the mob regaled themselves with so much wine that six or seven lost their lives owing to the burning roof falling in upon them. The destruction of Bordesley Hall, the residence of John Taylor, Esq., with William Hutton's town house, completed the work of Friday, July 15th.

On Saturday, the 16th, the rioters commenced with the burning of William Hutton's country house at Bennett's Hill, Washwood Heath, which Miss Hutton has so graphically described in her letters. The beautiful residences of George Humphreys, Esq., and of William Russell, Esq., were reduced to ashes, and Moseley Hall, the property of John Taylor, Esq., was also destroyed. The rioters next fired the house of the Rev. Mr. Hobson, and burnt his all; then to Mr. Harwood's, whose house was licensed for public worship. They then plundered the dwelling of the Rev. Mr. Coates, one of the ministers of the Old Meeting, and the houses of Mr. Hawkes and Thomas Russell, Esq.

Sunday, the 17th, was ushered in with the burning of Kingswood Meeting House, the Parsonage House, with that of Mr. Cox, licensed for divine service. The latter part of the day was devoted to an attack upon Edgbaston Hall, the residence of Dr. Withering, who, though a Conformist to the established form of doctrine, had sheltered some Nonconformists. The timely arrival of the military prevented the destruction of the house, and the mob silently dispersed. During all this time Birmingham was in a state of panic; all the shops were closed; people cried out, and wrote outside their houses, "Church and King," in order to preserve their property from destruction.

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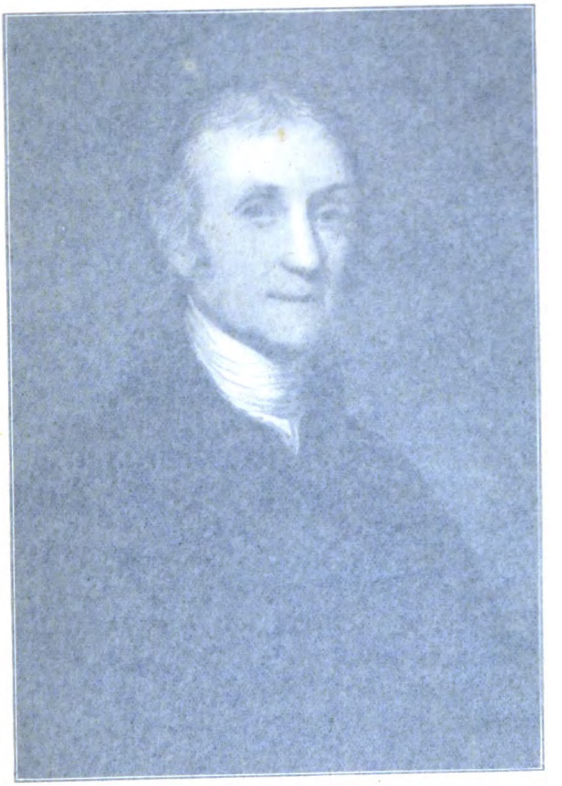
A CONTINUATION OF THE MEMOIRS,

Written at Northumberland, in America, in the beginning of the year 1795.

(188.) When I wrote the preceding part of these Memoirs, I was happy, as must have appeared in the course of them, in the prospect of spending the remainder of my life at Birmingham, where I had every advantage for pursuing my studies, both philosophical and theological; but it pleased the Sovereign Disposer of all things to appoint for me other removals, and the manner in which they were brought about was more painful to me than the removals themselves. I am far, however, from questioning the wisdom or the goodness of the appointments respecting myself or others.

(189.) To resume the account of my pursuits where the former part of the Memoirs left it, I must observe that, in the prosecution of my experiments, I was led to maintain the doctrine of phlogiston against Mr. Lavoisier, and other chemists in France, whose opinions were adopted not only by almost all the philosophers of that country, but by those in England and Scotland also. My friends, however, of the Lunar Society were never satisfied with the anti-phlogistic doctrine. My experiments and observations on this subject were published in various papers in the "Philosophical Transactions." At Birmingham I also published a new edition of my publications on the subject of *air*, and others connected with it, reducing the six volumes to

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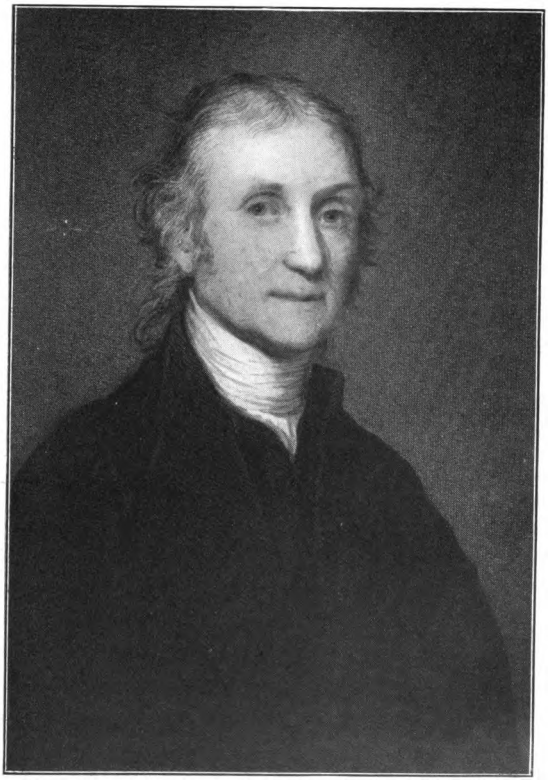
A CONTINUATION OF THE MEMOIRS.

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three, which, with his consent, I dedicated to the Prince of Wales.

(190.) In theology, I continued my "Defences of Unitarianism," until it appeared to myself and my friends that my antagonists produced nothing to which it was of any consequence to reply. But I did not, as I had proposed, publish any address to the bishops, or to the legislature, on the subject. The former I wrote, but did not publish. I left it, however, in the hands of Mr. Belsham, when I came to America, that he might dispose of it as he should think proper.

(191.) The pains that I took to ascertain the state of early opinions concerning Jesus Christ, and the great misapprehensions I perceived in all the ecclesiastical historians, led me to undertake a "General History of the Christian Church to the Fall of the Western Empire," which accordingly I wrote in two volumes octavo, and dedicated to Mr. Shore. This work I mean to continue.

(192.) At Birmingham I wrote the "Second Part" of my "Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever," and dedicated the whole to Mr. Tayleur, of Shrewsbury, who had afforded the most material assistance in the publication of many of my theological works, without which, the sale being inconsiderable, I should not have been able to publish them at all.

(193.) Before I left Birmingham, I preached a funeral sermon for my friend, Dr. Price, and another for Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, who died with us on a visit to preach our annual charity school sermon. I also preached the last annual sermon to the friends of the college at Hackney. All these three sermons were published.

(194.) About two years before I left Birmingham the question about the "Test Act" was much agitated both in and out of Parliament. This, however, was altogether with-

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out any concurrence of mine. I only delivered and published a sermon on the 5th of November, 1789, recommending the most peaceful method of pursuing our object. Mr. Madan, however, the most respectable clergyman in the town, preaching and publishing a very inflammatory sermon on the subject, inveighing in the bitterest manner against the Dissenters in general, and myself in particular, I addressed a number of "Familiar Letters to the Inhabitants of Birmingham," in our defence. This produced a reply from him, and other letters from me. All mine were written in an ironical and rather a pleasant manner, and in some of the last of them I introduced a farther reply to Mr. Burn, another clergyman in Birmingham, who had addressed to me "Letters on the Infallibility of the Testimony of the Apostles concerning the Person of Christ," after replying to his first set of letters in a separate publication.

(195.) From these small pieces I was far from expecting any serious consequences. But the Dissenters in general being very obnoxious to the court, and it being imagined, though without any reason, that I had been the chief promoter of the measures which gave them offence, the clergy, not only in Birmingham, but through all England, seemed to make it their business, by writing in the public papers, by preaching, and other methods, to inflame the minds of the people against me. And on occasion of the celebration of the anniversary of the French Revolution, on July 14, 1791, by several of my friends, but with which I had little to do, a mob, encouraged by some persons in power, first burned the Meeting-house* in which I preached, then another Meeting-

* As the two chapels were totally destroyed, a large building in Livery Street was fitted up for them to worship together for the time. Dr. Priestley's chapel, called the New Meeting, was rebuilt upon its old

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house in the town, and then my dwelling-house, demolishing my library, apparatus, and, as far as they could, everything belonging to me. They also burned, or much damaged, the houses of many Dissenters, chiefly my friends; the particulars of which I need not recite, as they will be found in two "Appeals," which I published on the subject, written presently after the riots.

(196.) Being in some personal danger on this occasion, I went to London; and so violent was the spirit of party which then prevailed, that I believe I could hardly have been safe in any other place.

(197.) There, however, I was perfectly so, though I continued to be an object of troublesome attention until I left the country altogether. It showed no small degree of courage and friendship in Mr. William Vaughan, to receive me into his house, and also in Mr. Salte, with whom I spent a month at Tottenham. But it showed more in Dr. Price's congregation, at Hackney, to invite me to succeed him, which they did, though not unanimously, some time after my arrival in London.

(198.) In this situation I found myself as happy as I had been at Birmingham, and, contrary to general expectation, I opened my lectures to young persons with great success, being attended by many from London, and, though I lost some of the hearers, I left the congregation in a better situation than that in which I found it.

(199.) On the whole, I spent my time even more happily at Hackney than ever I had done before, having every advantage for my philosophical and theological studies, in

site, in Moor Street, and the congregation remained there until 1861, when they removed to the present Church of the Messiah, Broad Street, Birmingham.

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some respects superior to what I had enjoyed at Birmingham, especially from my easy access to Mr. Lindsey, and my frequent intercourse with Mr. Belsham,* Professor of Divinity in the New College, near which I lived. Never, on this side the grave, do I expect to enjoy myself so much as I did by the fireside of Mr. Lindsey, conversing with him and Mrs. Lindsey on theological and other subjects, or in my frequent walks with Mr. Belsham, whose views of most important subjects were, like Mr. Lindsey's, the same with my own.

(200.) I found, however, my society much restricted with respect to my philosophical acquaintance, most of the members of the Royal Society shunning me on account of my religious or political opinions, so that I at length withdrew myself from them, and gave my reasons for so doing in the preface to my "Observations and Experiments on the Generation of Air from Water," which I published at Hackney. For, with the assistance of my friends, I had, in a great measure, replaced my apparatus, and had resumed my experiments, though after the loss of nearly two years.

(201.) Living in the neighbourhood of the New College, I voluntarily undertook to deliver the lectures to the pupils on the subject of "History and General Policy," which I had composed at Warrington, and also on "Experimental Philosophy and Chemistry," the "Heads" of which I drew up for this purpose, and afterwards published. In being useful to this institution I found a source of considerable satisfaction to myself. Indeed, I have always had a high degree of enjoyment in lecturing to young persons, though more on theological subjects than on any other.

(202.) After the riots in Birmingham, I wrote "An

* Co-pastor, and presently successor to Mr. Lindsey in the pulpit of Essex Street Chapel, London.

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Appeal to the Public " on the subject, and that being replied to by the clergy of the place, I wrote a " Second Part," to which, though they had pledged themselves to do it, they made no reply; so that, in fact, the criminality of the magistrates and other principal high-church men at Birmingham, in promoting the riot, remains acknowledged. Indeed, many circumstances which have appeared since that time show that the friends of the Court, if not the Prime Ministers themselves, were the favourers of that riot, having, no doubt, thought to intimidate the friends of liberty by the measure.

(203.) To my appeal I subjoined various " Addresses" that were sent to me from several descriptions of persons in England and abroad, and from them I will not deny that I received much satisfaction, as it appeared that the friends of liberty—civil and religious—were of opinion that I was a sufferer in that cause. From France I received a considerable number of addresses, and when the present *National Convention* was called, I was invited by many of the departments to be a member of it. But I thought myself more usefully employed at home, and that I was but ill-qualified for a business which required knowledge which none but a native of the country could possess, and, therefore, declined the honour that was proposed to me.

(204.) But no addresses gave me so much satisfaction as those from my late congregation, and especially of the young persons belonging to it, who had attended my lectures. They are a standing testimony of the zeal and fidelity with which I did my duty with respect to them, and which I value highly.

(205.) Besides congratulatory addresses, I received much pecuniary assistance from various persons and bodies of men which more than compensated for my pecuniary losses, though what was awarded me at the assizes fell two thousand

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pounds short of them. But my brother-in-law, Mr. John Wilkinson, from whom I had not at that time any expectation, in consequence of my son's leaving his employment, was the most generous on the occasion. Without any solicitation, he immediately sent me five hundred pounds, and afterwards transferred to me ten thousand pounds which he had deposited in the French funds, and, until that be productive, he allows me two hundred pounds per annum.

(206.) After the riots, I published my "Letters to the Swedenborgian Society," which I had composed, and prepared for the press just before.

(207.) Mr. Wakefield living in the neighbourhood of the college, and publishing at this time his objections to *public worship*, they made a great impression on many of our young men, and in his preface he reflected much on the character of Dr. Price. On both these accounts I thought myself called upon to reply to him, which I did in a series of "Letters to a Young Man." But though he made several angry replies, I never noticed any of them. In this situation I also answered Mr. Evanson's "Observations on the Dissonance of the Evangelists, in a Second Set of Letters to a Young Man." He also replied to me, but I was satisfied with what I had done, and did not continue the controversy.

(208.) Besides the "Sermon" which I delivered on my acceptance of the invitation to the meeting at Hackney, in the preface to which I gave a detailed account of my *system of catechising*, I published two "Fast Sermons," for the years 1793 and 1794, in the latter of which I gave my ideas of ancient prophecies, compared with the then state of Europe, and in the preface to it I gave an account of my reasons for leaving the country. I also published a "Farewell Sermon."

(209.) But the most important of my publications in this

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situation were a series of "Letters to the Philosophers and Politicians of France, on the Subject of Religion." I thought that the light in which I then stood in that country gave me some advantage in my attempts to enforce the evidence of natural and revealed religion. I also published a set of "Sermons on the Evidences of Revelation," which I first delivered by public notice, and the delivery of which was attended by great numbers. They were printed just before I left England.

(210.) As the reasons for this step in my conduct are given at large in the preface to my "Fast Sermon," I shall not dwell upon them here. The bigotry of the country in general made it impossible for me to place my sons in it to any advantage. William had been some time in France, and on the breaking out of the troubles in that country he had embarked for America, where his two brothers met him. My own situation, if not hazardous, was become unpleasant, so that I thought my removal would be of more service to the cause of truth than my longer stay in England. At length, therefore, with the approbation of all my friends, without exception, but with great reluctance on my own part, I came to that resolution; I being at a time of life in which I could not expect much satisfaction as to friends and society, comparable to that which I left, in which the resumption of my philosophical pursuits must be attended with great disadvantage, and in which success in my still more favourite pursuit, the propagation of Unitarianism, was still more uncertain. It was also painful to me to leave my daughter, Mr. Finch having the greatest aversion to leave his relations and friends in England.

(211.) At the time of my leaving England, my son, in conjunction with Mr. Cooper, and other English emigrants,

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had a scheme for a large settlement for the friends of liberty in general, near the head of the Susquehanna, in Pennsylvania. And taking it for granted that it would be carried into effect, after landing at New York, I went to Philadelphia, and thence came to Northumberland, a town nearest to the proposed settlement, thinking to reside there until some progress had been made in it. The settlement was given up; but being here, and my wife and myself liking the place, I have determined to take up my residence here, though subject to many disadvantages. Philadelphia was excessively expensive, and this comparatively a cheap place; and my sons, settling in the neighbourhood, will be less exposed to temptation, and more likely to form habits of sobriety and industry. They will also be settled at much less expense than in or near a large town. We hope, after some time, to be joined by a few of our friends from England, that a readier communication will be opened with Philadelphia, and that the place will improve, and become more eligible in other respects.

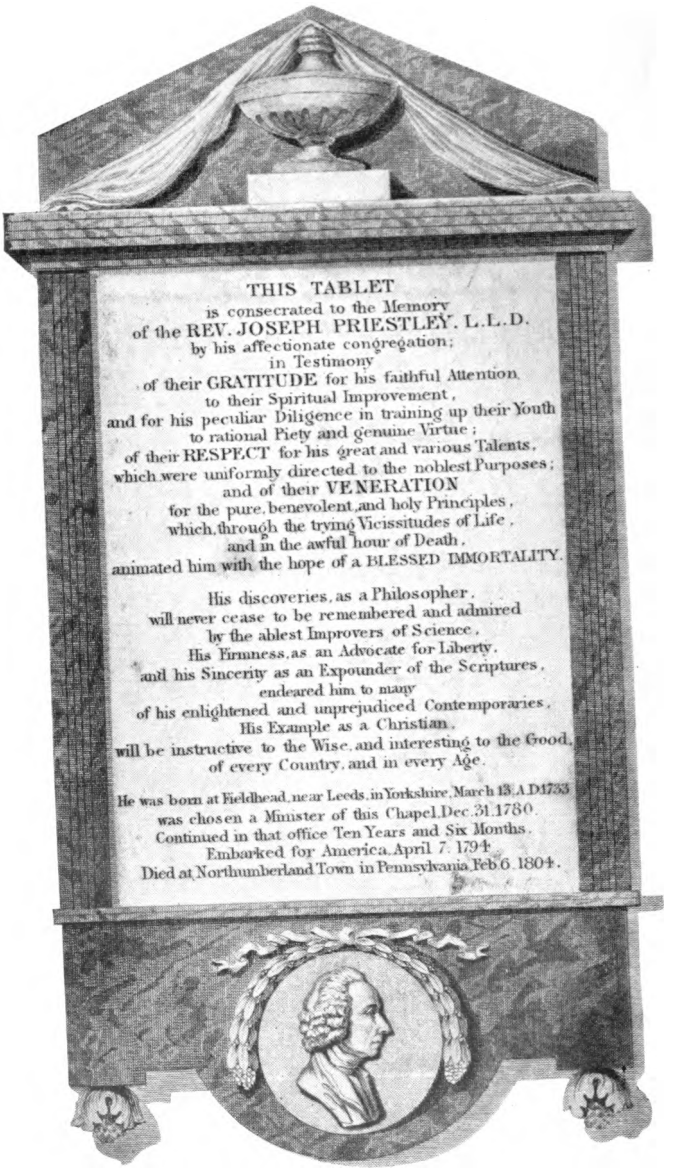
(212.) When I was at sea, I wrote some "Observations on the Cause of the Present Prevalence of Infidelity," which I published, and prefixed to a new edition of the "Letters to the Philosophers and Politicians of France." I have also published my "Fast and Farewell Sermons," and my "Small Tracts," in defence of Unitarianism; also a "Continuation of those Letters," and a "Third Part of Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever," in answer to "Mr. Paine's Age of Reason."

(213.) The observations on the prevalence of infidelity I have much enlarged, and intend soon to print; but I am chiefly employed on the continuation of my "History of the Christian Church."

(214.) Northumberland, March 24th, 1795, in which I have completed the sixty-second year of my age.

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CONCLUSION OF THE MEMOIRS

OF

DR. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

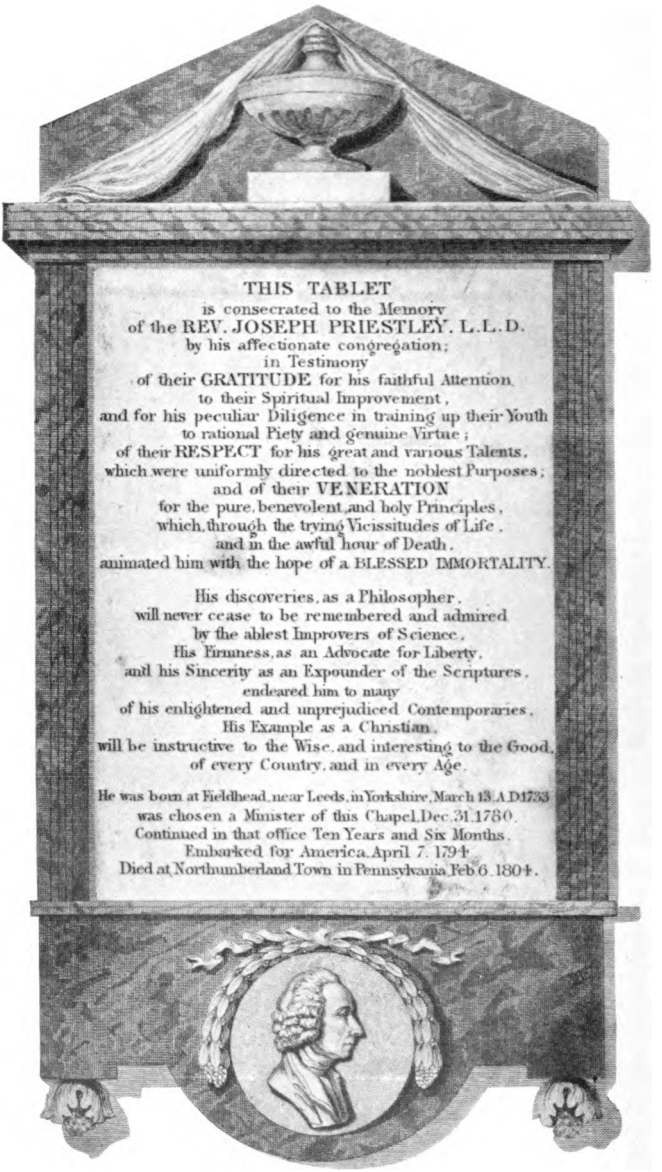
(WRITTEN BY HIS SON JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.)

Thus far the narrative is from my father's manuscript, and I regret extremely, with the reader, that [illegible] give an account of the latter period of his [illegible].

It entertained hopes at one time that he [illegible] continued it himself; and he was frequently requested to do so, by me and many of his friends, in the course of the year preceding his death. He had then nearly completed the literary works he had in view; he [illegible] of life when, in imitation of his friend Mr. Locke, he determined not to publish again in England; and he probably would not have ventured to [illegible] without first subjecting it to the inspection of a friend.

He was requested also, in imitation of [illegible] to add at the close of his Memoirs a summary of his religious opinions. This would have counteracted the suspicions entertained by some that they had undergone a considerable change since his coming to America; and it was the wish of his friends that such a brief and simple statement [illegible] appeared to him essential to the Christian character, would attract the attention [illegible]

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CONCLUSION OF THE MEMOIRS

OF

DR. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

(WRITTEN BY HIS SON JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.)

THUS far the narrative is from my father's manuscript, and I regret extremely, with the reader, that it falls to my lot to give an account of the latter period of his valuable life.

I entertained hopes at one time that he would have continued it himself; and he was frequently requested to do so, by me and many of his friends, in the course of the year preceding his death. He had then nearly completed all the literary works he had in view; he had arrived at that period of life when, in imitation of his friend, Mr. Lindsey, he had determined not to preach again in public; and beyond which he probably would not have ventured to publish any work without first subjecting it to the inspection of some judicious friend.

He was requested also, in imitation of Courayer, to add at the close of his Memoirs a summary of his religious opinions. This would have counteracted the suspicions entertained by some that they had undergone a considerable change since his coming to America; and it was thought by his friends that such a brief and simple statement of all that appeared to him essential to the Christian belief, and the Christian character, would attract the attention of many

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readers previously indisposed to religion altogether, from not understanding its real nature, and judging of it only from the corrupt, adulterated, and complicated state in which it is professed in all countries called Christian. Unbelievers in general have no conception of the perfect coincidence of Christianity with rational philosophy, of the sublime views it affords of the divine benevolence, and how powerfully it acts to promote the pleasures and lessen the evils of the present life, at the same time that it holds out to us a certain prospect of a future and endless state of enjoyment. It was suggested to him also, that as his society through life had been singularly varied and extensive, and his opportunities of attaining a general knowledge of the world, and a particular knowledge of eminent political and literary characters, very great, it would contribute much to the instruction and amusement of those into whose hand his Memoirs should fall, if they were accompanied with anecdotes of the principal characters with whom he had been acquainted. For he had a fund of anecdote which he was never backward to produce for the amusement of his friends, as occasions served for introducing it. But his relations were never sarcastic or ironical, or tended to disparage the characters of the persons spoken of, unless on subjects of manifest importance to the interests of society.

He meant to have complied with the above suggestions, but being at that time very busily employed about his "Comparison," and thinking his Memoirs of little value compared with the works about which he was then engaged, he put off the completion of his narrative until his other works should be ready for the press. Unfortunately, this was too late. The work he had in hand was not completed until the 22nd of January, when he was very weak, and

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suffered greatly from his disorder, and he died on the 6th of February following.

The reader will therefore make allowance for the difference between what these Memoirs might have been, and what they now are; and particularly for the part which I venture to lay before the public, as a continuation of his own account.

The reasons that induced him to quit England, and the progress of his opinions and inclinations respecting that last important era in his life, have been but briefly stated in the preceding pages by himself. But as many may peruse these Memoirs, into whose hands his "Appeal to the Public," occasioned by the riots at Birmingham, and his "Fast Sermon," in which he assigns at length his reasons for leaving his native country, are not likely to fall, I think it right to present to the readers, in his own words, the history of the motives that impelled him to exchange his residence in England for one in this country.

[A part only of the extracts which Priestley's son inserted in his narrative are here reprinted.—Ed.]

"If, instead of flying from lawless violence, I had been flying from public justice, I could not have been pursued with more rancour, nor could my friends have been more anxious for my safety. One man, who happened to see me on horseback on one of the nights on which I escaped from Birmingham, expressed his regret that he had not taken me, expecting probably some considerable reward, as he said it was so easy for him to have done it. My friends earnestly advised me to disguise myself, as I was going to London. But all that was done in that way was taking a place for me in the mail-coach, which I entered at Worcester in another name than my own. However, the friend who had the courage to receive me in London had thought it necessary to

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provide a dress that should disguise me, and also a method of making my escape in case the house should have been attacked on my account, and for some time my friends would not suffer me to appear in the streets.

"After the riots in Birmingham, it was the expectation, and evidently the wish, of many persons that I should immediately fly to France or America. But I had no consciousness of guilt to induce me to fly from my country. On the contrary, I came directly to London, and instantly, by means of my friend, Mr. Russell, signified to the king's ministers that I *was* there, and ready, if they thought proper, to be interrogated on the subject of the riot. But no notice was taken of the message.

"Accordingly I took up my residence at Clapton, where I now am, though so prevalent was the idea of my insecurity that I was not able to take the house in my own name, and, when a friend of mine took it in *his*, it was with much difficulty that, after some time, the landlord was prevailed upon to transfer the lease to me. He expressed his apprehensions not only of the house that I occupied being demolished, but also a capital house in which he himself resides at the distance of no less than twenty miles from London, whither he supposed the rioters would go next, merely for suffering me to live in a house of *his*.

"The managers of one of the principal charities among the Dissenters applied to me to preach their annual sermon, and I had consented. But the treasurer, a man of fortune, who knew nothing more of me than my name, was so much alarmed at it that he declared he could not sleep. I therefore, to his great relief, declined preaching at all.

"When it was known that I was settled where I now am, several of my friends who lived near me were seriously

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advised to remove their papers and other most valuable effects to some place of greater safety in London. On the 14th of July, 1792, it was taken for granted by many of the neighbours that my house was to come down, just as at Birmingham the year before. When the Hackney association was formed, several servants in the neighbourhood actually removed their goods, and when there was some political meeting at the house of Mr. Breillat, though about two miles from my house, a woman, whose daughter was servant in the house contiguous to mine, came to her mistress to entreat that she might be out of the way, and it was not without much difficulty that she was pacified, and prevailed upon to let her continue in the house, her mistress saying that she was as safe as herself.

"On several other occasions the neighbourhood has been greatly alarmed on account of my being so near them. Nor was this without apparent reason. I could name a person, and to appearance a reputable tradesman, who, in the company of his friends, and in the hearing of one of my late congregation at Birmingham, but without knowing him to be such, declared that, in case of any disturbance, they would immediately come to Hackney, evidently for the purpose of mischief. In this state of things it is not to be wondered at that, of many servants who were recommended to me, and some that were actually hired, very few could, for a long time, be prevailed upon to live with me.

"These facts not only show how general was the idea of my particular insecurity in this country, but, what is of much more consequence, and highly interesting to the country at large, an idea of the general disposition to rioting and violence that prevails in it, and that the Dissenters are the objects of it. Mr. Pitt very justly observed, in his speech on the

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subject of the riots at Birmingham, that it was 'the effervescence of the public mind.' Indeed, the effervescible matter has existed in this country ever since the civil wars in the time of Charles I., and it was particularly apparent in the reign of Queen Anne. But the power of government under the former princes of the House of Hanover prevented its doing any mischief. The late events show that this power is no longer exerted as it used to be, but that, on the contrary, there prevails an idea—well or ill-founded—that tumultuary proceedings against Dissenters will not receive any effectual discouragement."—*Preface to Fast Sermon for* 1794.

On the 8th day of April, 1794, my father set sail from London, and arrived at New York on the 4th of June, where he stayed about a fortnight. Many persons went to meet him upon his landing, and while he stayed at New York he received addresses from various societies, and great attention from many of the most respectable persons in the place. From thence he proceeded to Philadelphia, where he received an address from the American Philosophical Society. Independently of the above marks of respect, he was chosen by a unanimous vote of the trustees of the university of Philadelphia, Professor of Chemistry. He was likewise invited to return and stay at New York, and open a Unitarian place of worship, which was to have been provided for him, and also to give lectures on experimental philosophy to one hundred subscribers at ten dollars each. These invitations, indeed, he did not receive until he had been settled some little time at Northumberland. These are sufficient proofs that the citizens of this country were not insensible to his merit as a philosopher, and that they esteemed him for the part he took in the politics of Europe. That he was not invited immediately on his arrival to preach either at New York or

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Philadelphia, was not from any want of respect for his character, but because Unitarianism was in a manner unknown, and by many ignorantly supposed to have some connection with infidelity. The proper evidences of Christianity, the corruptions it has suffered, the monstrous additions that have been engrafted on its primitive simplicity, and the real state of the opinions of Christians in the first ages of the church, were subjects that had hardly ever been discussed in this country. The controversies that had been carried on in England had not awakened attention here, and therefore, though my father was known as having suffered in consequence of his opposition to the established religion of his country, yet his particular opinions were little understood.

About the middle of July, 1794, my father left Philadelphia for Northumberland, a town situated at the confluence of the north-east and west branches of the Susquehanna, and about one hundred and thirty miles north-west of Philadelphia. I, and some other English gentlemen, projected a settlement of three hundred thousand acres of land, about fifty miles distant from Northumberland. The subscription was filled chiefly by persons in England. Northumberland being at that time the nearest town to the proposed settlement, my father wished to see the place, and ascertain what conveniences it would afford, should he incline either to fix there permanently, or only until the settlement should be sufficiently advanced for his accommodation; he was induced, likewise, to retreat—at least, for the summer months—into the country, fearing the effects of the hot weather in such a city as Philadelphia. He had not, as has been erroneously reported, the least concern in the projected settlement. He was not consulted in the formation of the plan of it, nor had

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he come to any determination to join it had it been carried into effect.

Fortunately for the original proposers, the scheme was abandoned. It might and would have answered in a pecuniary point of view, as the land now sells at double and treble the price then asked for it, without the advantages which that settlement would have given rise to; but the generality of Englishmen come to this country with such erroneous ideas, and, unless previously accustomed to a life of labour, are so ill qualified to commence cultivation in a wilderness, that the projectors would most probably have been subject to still more unfounded abuse than they have been, for their well-meant endeavours to promote the interests of their countrymen.

The scheme of a Settlement thus failing, for reasons which it is not necessary now to state, my father, struck with the beauty of the situation of Northumberland, which is universally allowed to be equal, if not superior, to any in the state; believing that, from the nature of its situation, it was likely to become a great thoroughfare, and having reason to consider it as healthy as it was pleasant, the intermittents to which it has latterly been subject being then unknown, determined to settle there. Before he came to this resolution, however, he had the offer of the Professorship of Chemistry in the university of Pennsylvania, before-mentioned, which would probably have yielded him three thousand dollars per annum, there being generally about two hundred students in medicine, of whom about one hundred and fifty attend the chemical lectures; as likewise the offer of a situation as Unitarian preacher, and lecturer in natural philosophy, as I have likewise mentioned before.

Soon after his settlement at Northumberland, many

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persons, with a view that his qualifications as an instructor of youth should not be wholly lost to the country, concurred in a plan for the establishment of a college at Northumberland. To this scheme several subscribed from this motive alone. Many of the principal landholders, partly from the above, and partly from motives of interest, contributed largely, both in money and land, and there was a fair prospect, from the liberal principles upon which it was founded, that it would have been of very great advantage to the country. My father was requested to draw up a plan of the course of study he would recommend, as well as the rules for the internal management of the institution, and he was appointed president. He, however, declined receiving any emolument, and proposed giving such lectures as he was best qualified for, *gratis*, in the same manner as he had done at Hackney, and he meant to have given to the institution the use of his library and apparatus until the students could have been furnished with them by means of the funds of the college. In consequence of the failure of some of the principal contributors, the scheme fell through at that time, and little more was done during my father's life-time than to raise the shell of a convenient building.

I shall in this place state, though I shall anticipate in so doing, that in the year 1803 a vacancy occurred in the University of Pennsylvania, by the death of Dr. Euen, principal of that institution. It was intimated to my father by many of the trustees that in case he would accept of the appointment, there was little doubt of his obtaining it; Mr. M'Kean, the present governor of the state of Pennsylvania, being among others particularly anxious that he should accept of it.

In addition to the reasons that had induced him to decline

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the offer of the professorship of chemistry, were to be added the weak state of his health, which would have made the idea of his having any serious engagement to fulfil very irksome to him; he accordingly declined it.

He had frequent intimations of other proposals, of a similar nature, that would have been made to him, had it not become generally known that he could not accede to them from their being inconsistent with the plan of life he had laid down for himself.

My father would, no doubt, have been glad to have returned to England, and have enjoyed the society of his old and much-valued friends; he would have rejoiced to have been nearer the arts and sciences; to have been joined again to his congregation, and resumed his duties as a Christian preacher; he would have been glad at the close of life, as he expresses himself, "to have found a grave in the land that gave him birth;" but this was impossible, and no person can read the preface of his "Fast Sermon," quoted above, but must be convinced of it. Though he raised the credit of his native country by the brilliancy, the extent, and the usefulness of his discoveries in different branches of science; though during his own life he inculcated principles of virtue and religion which the government pretended at least to believe were necessary to the well being of the state; though in no single act of his life had he violated any law of his country, or encouraged others to do so, what was the treatment he met with in that land of boasted civilisation, and at the close of the eighteenth century? It is sufficiently known, and will, as it ought to do, affect the character of the nation at large. Therefore, though he could have forgotten and forgiven all that was past, though the above-mentioned motives would have had great weight in inducing him to

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return, yet there was no reason to expect that he should meet hereafter with better treatment than he had already experienced; and in consequence of this fixed persuasion, he never entertained the idea of returning to live in England. He frequently talked, indeed, of returning to visit his friends; but when peace took place, and he could have gone with safety, so comfortably was he settled in this country, and such was his opinion of the state of things in England, that he abandoned even the idea of a temporary journey thither, altogether.

Being now settled at Northumberland, with his mind at peace, and at ease in his circumstances, he seriously applied himself to those studies which he had long been compelled to desist from, and which he had but imperfectly attended to while he resided at Hackney. It is true that he spent his time there very agreeably, in a society of highly valued friends; but he did little compared to what he effected while he was at Birmingham, or what he has done during his residence here, owing to his time being very much broken in upon at Hackney, by company. To prove how much he did in this country, it is only necessary to refer to the list of the publications which he presented to the world in various branches of science, in theology and general literature. Here, as in England, though more at leisure than formerly, he continued to apportion his time to the various occupations in which he was engaged, and strictly adhered to a regular plan of alternate study and relaxation, from which he never materially deviated.

It was while my father was at the academy that he commenced a practice which he continued until three or four days of his death, of keeping a diary, in which he put down the occurrences of the day; what he was employed about,

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where he had been, and particularly an exact account of what he had been reading, mentioning the names of the authors, and the number of pages he read, which was generally a fixed number, previously determined upon in his own mind. He likewise noted down any hints suggested by what he read in the course of the day. It was his custom at the beginning of each year to arrange the plan of study that he meant to pursue that year, and to review the general situation of his affairs, and at the end of the year he took an account of the progress he had made, how far he had executed the plan he had laid down, and whether his situation exceeded or fell short of the expectations he had formed.

This practice was a source of great satisfaction to him through life. It was at first adopted as a mode of regulating his studies, and afterwards continued from the pleasure it gave him. The greater part of his diaries were destroyed at the riots at Birmingham, but there are still extant those for the years 1754, 1755, and several of the subsequent years.

As it will serve to show the regularity with which he pursued his studies, and may possibly be instructive as well as amusing to the reader, I shall give a specimen of the manner in which he spent his time while he was at the academy at Daventry, and for that purpose shall select his diary for the first half of the year 1755, when he was in his twenty-second year. The diary contains a particular account of what he read and wrote each day, and at different periods of the year he sums up in the following manner the progress he had made in improvement, which I give as entered at the end of the diary.

BUSINESS DONE IN JANUARY, FEBRUARY, AND MARCH, 1755.

Practical.—Howe's Blessedness of the Righteous; Bennet's Pastoral Care; Norris's Letters, and some Sermons.

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Controversial.—Taylor on Atonement; Hampton's Answer; Sherlock's Discourses, vol. 1; Christianity not founded in Argument; Doddridge's Answer; Warburton's Divine Legation; Benson on the First Planting of Christianity; King's Constitution of the Primitive Church.

Classics.—Josephus, vol 1, from page 390 to 770; Ovid's Metamorphoses, to page 139; Tacitus's History; Life of Agricola; and Manners of the Germans.

Scriptures.—John the Evangelist; the Acts of the Apostles; the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians; 1st and 2nd Corinthians in Greek; Isaiah to the 8th chapter in Hebrew.

Mathematics.—Maclaurin's Algebra to part 2nd.

Entertaining.—Irene; Prince Arthur; Ecclesiastical Characters; Dryden's Fables; Peruvian Tales; Voyage round the World; Oriental Tales; Massey's Travels; Life of Hai Ebn Yokdam; History of Abdallah.

Composition.—A Sermon on the Wisdom of God; an Oration on the Means of Virtue; 1st vol. of the Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion.

BUSINESS DONE FROM APRIL 1 TO JUNE 23, 1755.

Practical.—Watts's Catechism, and Discourses on Catechizing; Fenelon's Spiritual Works, vol. 1, and half of vol. 2; Saurin's Sermons (a few); Thomas-a-Kempis, book 1 to chap. 21; Cotton Mather's Life; Jennings on Preaching Christianity.

Controversial.—Towgood, Gill, and Breckell, on Baptism; Le Clerc on Inspiration; Whiston's Historical Preface; Emlyn's Narrative and Humble Enquiry; Apostolical Constitutions; Newton on the Prophecies; Winder's History of Knowledge; Hoadly on the Sacrament; Lowman on the Revelation; Moral Philosopher; Hume's Political Discourses; Middleton's Fathers of the Four First Centuries; Middleton

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and Waterland's Controversy; ——— on the Demoniacs; Goodrich's Display of Human Nature.

Classics.—Cicero's 1st Phillippic.

Historical.—Universal History, vol. 15 and 16, and to page 488 of the 17th.

Composition.—Second vol. of the Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion; wrote an Article on Edwards's translation of the Psalms for the Review.

It will be seen by this extract from his diary that his studies were very varied, which, as he was always persuaded, enabled him to do so much. This he constantly attended to through life, his chemical and philosophical pursuits serving as a kind of relaxation from his theological studies. His miscellaneous reading, which was at all times very extensive —comprising even novels and plays—still served to increase the variety. For many years of his life he never spent less than two or three hours a day in games of amusement as cards and backgammon, but particularly chess—at which he and my mother played regularly three games after dinner, and as many after supper. As his children grew up, chess was laid aside for whist, or some round game of cards, which he enjoyed as much as any of the company. It is hardly necessary to state that he never played for money, even for the most trifling sum.

To all these modes of relieving the mind he added bodily exercise. Independent of his laboratory furnishing him with a good deal, as he never employed an operator, and never allowed any one even to light a fire, he generally lived in situations which required his walking a good deal, as at Calne, Birmingham, and Hackney. Of that exercise he was very fond. He walked well, and his regular pace was four miles an hour. In situations where the necessity of walking was

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... Waterland's Controversy; ——— on the Demoniacs; ... rich's Display of Human Nature.

Classics.—Cicero's 1st Philli[p] .

Historical.—Universal Hi[st]ory, vol. 15 and 16, and to page 488 of the 17th.

Composition.—Second ... of the Institutes of Natural and Re[v]ealed Religion; w[rote] an Article on Edwards's trans[lation] ... Review.

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... ng the mind he added bodily ... s laboratory furnishing him with r employed an operator, and never light a fire, he generally lived in his walking a good deal, as at Calne, Birming... ... y. Of that exercise he was very fond. ... walk... ... his regular pace was four miles r. In s... ... e the necessity of walking was

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not imposed upon him, he worked in his garden, as at Calne, when he had not occasion to go to Bowood. At Northumberland, in America, he was particularly attached to this exercise.

But what principally enabled him to do so much was regularity, for it does not appear that, at any period of his life, he spent more than six or eight hours per day in business that required much mental exertion. I find in the same diary which I have quoted from above that he laid down the following daily arrangement of time for a minister's studies—Studying the scriptures one hour; practical writers one to two hours; composition one hour—in all five hours. He adds below: "All which may be conveniently dispatched before dinner, which leaves the afternoon for visiting and company, and the evening for exceeding in any article, if there be occasion. Six hours not too much, nor seven."

It appears by his diary that he followed this plan at that period of his life. He generally walked out in the afternoon, or spent it in company. At that time there was a society or club that assembled twice a week, at which the members debated questions, or took it in turn to deliver orations or read essays of their own composition. When not attending these meetings, he most generally appears to have spent the evening in company with some of the students in their chambers.

It was by the regularity and variety of his studies, more than by intenseness of application, that he performed so much more than even studious men generally do. At the time he was engaged about the most important works, and when he was not busily employed in making experiments, he always had leisure for company, of which he was fond. He never appeared hurried or behind-hand. He, however,

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never carried his complaisance so far as to neglect the daily task he had imposed upon himself; but as he was uniformly an early riser, and dispatched his more serious pursuits in the morning, it rarely happened but that he could accomplish the labours assigned for the day without having occasion to withdraw from visitors at home or society abroad, or giving reason to suppose that the company of others was a restraint upon his pursuits.

This habit of regularity extended itself to everything that he read and everything he did that was susceptible of it. He never read a book without determining in his own mind when he would finish it. Had he a work to transcribe, he would fix a time for its completion. This habit increased upon him as he grew in years, and his diary was kept upon the plan I have before described till within a few days of his death.

To the regularity and variety of his studies must be added a considerable degree of mechanical contrivance, which greatly facilitated the execution of many of his compositions. It was, however, most apparent in his laboratory, and displayed in the simplicity and neatness of his apparatus, which was the great cause of the accuracy of his experiments, and of the fair character which he acquired as an experimental chemist. This was the result, in the first instance, of a necessary attention to economy in all his pursuits, and was afterwards continued from choice when the necessity no longer existed. I return from this digression—which I thought necessary to give the reader a general view of my father's occupations and his manner of spending his time—to the circumstances attending the remaining years of his life.

At his first settling at Northumberland there was no house to be procured that would furnish him with the conveniences of a library and laboratory, in addition to the room necessary

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for a family. Hence, in the beginning of the year 1795, being then fixed in his determination to move no more, he resolved upon building a house convenient for his pursuits. During the time the house was building, he had no convenience for making experiments more than a common room afforded, and he was thereby prevented from doing much in this way. Still, he ascertained several facts of importance in the year 1795 on the analysis of atmospheric air, and also some in continuation of those on the generation of air from water.

He had, however, leisure and opportunity for his other studies, and in 1795 he published observations on the increase of infidelity, and he continued his "Church History, from the Fall of the Western Empire to the Reformation."

In the spring of 1796 he spent three months at Philadelphia, and delivered there a set of discourses on the evidences of revelation, which he composed with a view to counteract the effect produced by the writings of unbelievers, which, as might be expected, was very great in a country where rational opinions in religion were but little known, and where the evidences of revelation had been but little attended to. It was a source of great satisfaction to him, and what he had little previous reason to expect, and his lectures were attended by very crowded audiences, including most of the members of the Congress of the United States, at that time assembled at Philadelphia, and of the executive officers of the government. These discourses—which, in a regular and connected series—placed Christianity, and the evidences of its truth, in a more clear and satisfactory point of view than it had been usually considered in this country, attracted much attention, and created an interest in the subject which there is reason to believe has produced lasting effects. My father received

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assurances from many of the most respectable persons in the country, that they viewed the subject in a totally different light from what they had before done, and that could they attend places of worship where such rational doctrines were inculcated, they should do it with satisfaction.

As my father had through life considered the office of a Christian minister as the most useful and honourable of any, and had always derived the greatest satisfaction from fulfilling its duties, particularly from catechising young persons; the greatest source of uneasiness, therefore, to him at Northumberland was, that there was no sufficient opportunity of being useful in that way. Though he was uniformly treated with kindness and respect by the people of the place, yet their sentiments in religion were so different from his own, and the nature and tendency of his opinions were so little understood, that the establishment of a place of Unitarian worship, perfectly free from any Calvinistic or Arian tenet, was next to impossible. All, therefore, that he could do in that way was, for the two or three first years, to read a service either at his own or at my house, at which a few (perhaps a dozen) English persons were usually present, and in time, as their numbers increased, he made use of a schoolroom near his house, where from twenty to thirty regularly attended, and among them some of the inhabitants of the place, who, by degrees, began to divest themselves of their prejudices with respect to his opinions. However small the number of persons attending, he administered the Lord's supper, a rite upon which he always laid particular stress.

In the autumn of 1795 he had the misfortune to lose his youngest son, of whom, being much younger than any of his other children, and having entertained the hopes of his succeeding him in his Theological and Philosophical pursuits,

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he was remarkably fond. He felt this misfortune the more severely as it was the first of the kind he had experienced, and particularly as it had a visible effect on my mother's health and spirits. He was, however, so constantly in the habit of viewing the hand of God in all things, and of considering every occurrence as leading to good, that his mind soon recovered its accustomed serenity, and his journey to Philadelphia (mentioned above), and the success which attended his first exertions in the cause of what he deemed pure and genuine Christianity, led him to look forward with cheerfulness to the future, and gave him an energy in his pursuits which was never exceeded in any part of his life. It was the same habit of viewing God as the author of all events, and producing good out of seeming evil, that enabled him to support himself so well under the greatest affliction that could possibly have befallen him, viz., the loss of his wife, my mother, who, through life, had been truly a helpmeet for him, supporting him under all his trials and sufferings with a constancy and perseverance truly praiseworthy, and who as he himself, in noting the event in his diary, justly observes, "was of a noble and generous mind, and cared much for others, and little for herself, through life."

In the period between the above very afflicting events, though his conveniences for experiment were not increased, owing to his house, and particularly his laboratory, not being finished, he wrote a small treatise in defence of the doctrine of Phlogiston, addressed to the philosophers in France. He likewise composed a second set of discourses of a similar kind to those delivered in Philadelphia the preceding winter. He preached and printed a sermon in defence of Unitarianism, and printed the first set of discourses; he completed his "Church History;" he made additional observations on the increase

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of infidelity, chiefly in answer to Mr. Volney; and drew up an "Outline of all the Evidences in Favour of Revelation."

In the spring of 1797 he again spent two or three months in Philadelphia, and delivered a second set of discourses, but partly from the novelty of the thing being done away, partly from the prejudices that began to be excited against him on account of his supposed political opinions (for high-toned politics began then to prevail in the fashionable circles), and partly owing to the discourses not being so well adapted for a public audience, though necessary to set the comparative excellence of Christianity in its true light, they were but thinly attended in comparison to his former set. This induced him to give up the idea of preaching any more regular sets of discourses. He, however, printed them, as likewise a sermon he preached in favour of the emigrants. He also composed at this time a third and enlarged edition of his "Observations on the Increase of Infidelity," a controversy with Mr. Volney; "A Tract on the Knowledge of a Future State among the Hebrews"; which, with the works he composed the year before, he printed as he found means and opportunity. He revised his "Church History," began his "Notes on the Scriptures," and his "Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos."

Towards the end of 1797, and not before, his library and laboratory were finished. None but men devoted to literature can imagine the pleasure he derived from being able to renew his experiments with every possible convenience, and from having his books once more arranged. His house was situated in a garden, commanding a prospect equal, if not superior, to any on the river Susquehanna, so justly celebrated for the picturesque views its banks afford. It was a singularly fortunate circumstance that he found at Northumberland

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several excellent workmen in metals, who could repair his instruments, make all the new articles he wanted in the course of his experimenting, as well as, he used to say, if not in some respects better than, he could have got them done in Birmingham; and in the society of Mr. Frederick Antis, the brother of Mr. Antis in England, and uncle of Mr. Latrobe the engineer, he derived great satisfaction. Mr. Antis was a man of mild and amiable manners; he possessed a very good knowledge of mechanics, the result of his own observation and reflection, and a fund of knowledge of many things which my father frequently found useful to resort to. The situation of Northumberland became abundantly more convenient than it was when he first came to the place. From there being no regular public post, there was now established a post twice a week to Philadelphia, and answers could be received to letters within a week, and the communication so much increased between the two places that the price of the carriage of goods was reduced from eleven shillings and threepence to six shillings per cwt., the distance being one hundred and thirty-two miles.

Thus conveniently situated, he resumed the same kind of life he led at Birmingham, experimenting the greater part of the day, the result of which he published in the "Medical Repository" of New York. Having completed his "Church History," he finished his "Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos." He likewise proceeded as far as Leviticus, in the design he had formed of writing "Notes on all the Books of Scripture"; and made some remarks on the origin of all religions by Dupuis; but the greater part of the time that he spent in theology, this year, was employed in re-composing the "Notes on the New Testament," which were destroyed at the riots.

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In the course of the year 1799 he finished his "Notes on all the Books of Scripture"; he published his "Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos"; he likewise printed his "Defence of the Doctrine of Phlogiston," above mentioned; and the greater part of each day in the summer was employed in making the additional experiments he had projected.

It was in the year 1799, during Mr. Adams's administration, that my father had occasion to write anything on the subject of politics in this country. It is well known to all his friends that politics were always a subject of secondary importance with him. He however took part occasionally in the conversations on that subject, which every person has a right to do, and which, about the time my father left England, no person could avoid doing, as the subject engrossed so large a part of the conversation in almost every company. He always argued on the side of liberty. He was, however, in favour only of those changes that could be brought about by fair argument, and his speculations on the subject of British politics did not go further than a reform in parliament, and no way tended, in his opinion, to affect the form of government, or the constitution of the kingdom, as vested in King, Lords, and Commons. He used frequently to say, and it was said to him, that though he was a Unitarian in religion, he was in that country a Trinitarian in politics.

When he came to America he found reason to change his opinions, and he became a decided friend to the general principles and practice of a completely representative government, founded upon universal suffrage, and excluding hereditary privileges, as it exists in this country. This change was naturally produced by observing the ease and happiness with which the people lived, and the unexampled prosperity

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of the country, of which no European, unless he has resided in it some time, and has observed the interior part of it, can be a competent judge. But with respect to England, he still remained anxious for its peace and prosperity, and though he had been so hardly used, and though he considered the administration of the country, if not instigating, at least conniving, at the riots, no resentment existed in his breast against the nation. In his feelings he was still an Englishman. Though he might speculatively consider that the mass of evil and misery had arisen to such a height in England, and in other European countries, that there was no longer any hope of a peaceable and gradual reform, yet, considering at the same time that the great body of the people, like the Negroes in the West Indies, were unprepared for the enjoyment of liberty in its full extent, and contemplating the evils necessarily attendant upon a violent change, he dreaded a revolution.

With respect to America, he had never interfered publicly in politics, and never wrote an article that could be considered in that light in any respect, except one published in a newspaper called the *Aurora*, signed "A Quaker in Politics," published on the 26th and 27th of February, 1798, and entitled "Maxims of Political Arithmetic"; and so little did he interest himself in the politics of this country, that he seldom if ever perused the debates in Congress, nor was he much acquainted with any of the leading political characters except three or four, and with these he never corresponded but with Mr. Adams, prior to his being chosen president, and Mr. Jefferson. He never was naturalised, nor did he take part directly or indirectly in any election. He persevered in the same sentiments even when he was under reasonable apprehensions that he should be banished as an alien; and

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though he advised his sons to be naturalised, saying it was what was daily done by persons who could not be suspected of wishing any ill to their native country, yet he would not; but said, that as he had been born and had lived an Englishman, he would die one, let what might be the consequence.

About the year 1799 the friends of liberty in America were greatly alarmed by the advancement of principles disgraceful to America, and by a practice less liberal in many respects than under the monarchical form of the British government. Nothing else was the subject of conversation, and my father, who, though never active in politics, at the same time never concealed his sentiments, uttered them freely in conversation, and they were, of course, opposed to the proceedings of the administration at the time. Added to this, Mr. Thomas Cooper, formerly of Manchester, and who at that time had undertaken for a short period, at the request of the printer, to edit a newspaper, then printed at Northumberland, had published some very severe strictures on the conduct of the administration, which were soon after published in a pamphlet under the title of "Political Essays."

By many my father might be ignorantly supposed to be the prompter on the occasion, as Mr. Cooper lived at that time with my father, and by those who knew better it was made the ostensible ground of objection to my father, to conceal the real one. In truth, he saw none of the essays until they were printed, nor was he consulted by Mr. Cooper upon any part of them. The consequence was, that all the bigotry and party zeal of that violent period were employed to injure him, and misrepresent his words and actions. He was represented as intriguing for offices for himself and his friend, and as an enemy to the Government which, they said, protected him; while men who were themselves but newly naturalised,

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or the immediate descendants of foreigners, bestowed upon him the epithet of alien, an epithet then used by the Government party as a term of reproach, though the country was principally indebted to the capital, industry, and enterprise of foreigners for the many improvements then carrying on. Such was the effect of all these slanderous reports, and such was the character of the administration, that it was intimated to my father, from Mr. Adams himself, that he wished he would abstain from saying anything on politics, lest he should get into difficulty. The alien law, which was passed under that administration, was at that time in operation, and a man, without being convicted of, or even positively charged with, any offence, might have been sent out of the country at a moment's warning, not only without a trial, but without the right of remonstrance. It was likewise hinted to my father, as he has himself stated, that he was one of the persons contemplated when the law was passed, so little did they know of his real character and disposition. This occasioned my father to write a set of letters to the inhabitants of Northumberland, in which he expressed his sentiments fully on all the political questions at that time under discussion. They had the effect of removing the unfavourable impressions that had been made on the minds of the liberal and candid, and procured him many friends. Fortunately, however, the violent measures then adopted produced a complete change in the minds of the people, and in consequence of it in the representation, proving, by the peaceableness of it, the excellence of this form of Government, and proving also that my father's sentiments, as well as Mr. Cooper's, were approved of by nine-tenths of the people of the United States.

It is but justice, however, to mention that in the above

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remarks, which have been made to represent my father's political character in its true light, and to account for his writing on the subject of politics, I do not mean to reflect on all the Federalists, and that though my father considered them all as in error, yet he acknowledged himself indebted to many of that party for the most sincere marks of friendship which he had received in this country, and that not only from his opponents in politics, but likewise from many of the principal clergymen of various denominations in Philadelphia, and particularly during his severe illness in that city, when party spirit was at the highest, it being at the time of Mr. Jefferson's first election to the presidency.

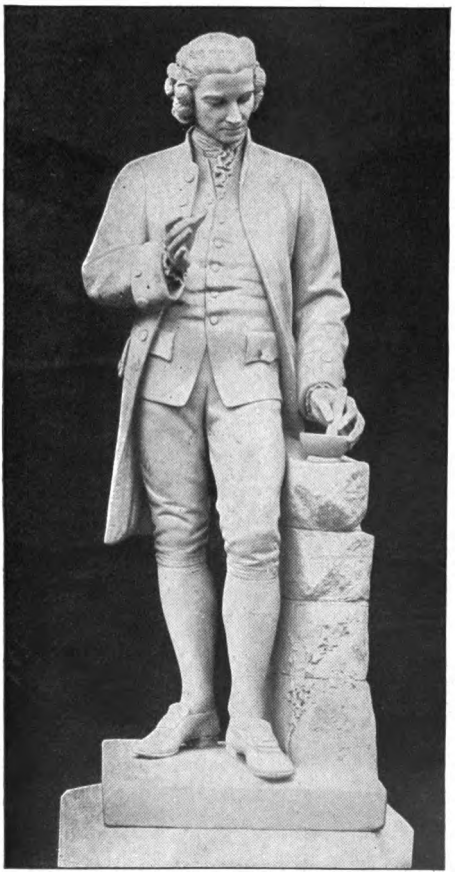
As my father has given an account of those friends to whose kindness and generosity he was principally indebted from the commencement of his literary career, to the time of his coming to America, I think it my duty to follow his example, and to make on his part those acknowledgments which, had he lived, he would have taken pleasure in making himself. To the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, independent of the many marks of the most sincere friendship which he was constantly receiving, he was occasionally indebted for pecuniary assistance at times when it was most wanting. Independent of fifty pounds per annum, which Mrs. Elizabeth Rayner allowed him from the time he left England, she left him by her will two thousand pounds in the four per cents. Mr. Michael Dodson, who is well known as the translator of Isaiah, left him five hundred pounds; and Mr. Samuel Salte left him one hundred pounds. The Duke of Grafton remitted him annually forty pounds. Therefore, though his expenses were far greater than he expected, and though his house had cost him double the sum he had contemplated, the generosity of his friends made him perfectly easy in his mind with

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by opponents in politics, but likewise from some
of the clergy of various denominations in Lon-
don particularly during his severe illness in the
autumn of 1793, when at the highest, it being at the
time of Mr. Jay's election to the presidency.
As my father never gave an account of those friends to
whose generosity he was principally indebted
during the first part of his literary career, to the time
of his leaving America, I think it my duty to follow his
example, and on his part those acknowledgments
which, if he lived, he would have taken pleasure in making
to the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, independent of
the marks of the most sincere friendship which he
constantly received during, he was occasionally indebted for
pecuniary assistance at times when it was most wanting.
Dr. Priestley's independent salary was 150 pounds per annum, which Mrs. Elizabeth
Rayner allowed him from the time he left England, she having
given him one thousand pounds in the four per cents.
Mr. Rayner, well known as the translator of
Thucydides, left him two thousand pounds; and Mr. Samuel Salte
left him two thousand pounds. The Duke of Grafton remitted
him two hundred pounds. Therefore, though his expenses
were far greater than he expected, and though his house had
not all the conveniences he had contemplated, the generosity
of his friends rendered him perfectly easy in his mind with



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respect to pecuniary affairs; and by freeing him from all care and anxiety on this head, contributed greatly to his happiness, and to his successful endeavours in the cause of truth. Besides the instances of friendly attention, the different branches of his family have been, in various ways, benefitted in consequence of the respect paid to my father's character, and the affectionate regard shown by his friends to all who were connected with him.

But what gave my father most real pleasure was the subscription set on foot by his friends in England to enable him to print his "Church History," and his "Notes on all the Books of Scripture." The whole was done without his knowledge, and the first information he received on the subject was, that there was a sum raised sufficient to cover the whole expense.

About the time he died, some of his friends in England understood that he was likely to suffer a loss in point of income of two hundred pounds per annum. Without any solicitation, about forty of them raised the sum of four hundred and fifty pounds, which was meant to have been continued annually while he lived. He did not live to know of this kind exertion in his favour. It is my duty, however, t record this instance of generosity, and I do it with pleasure and with gratitude. It likewise proves, that though my father, by the fearless avowal of his opinions, created many enemies, yet that the honesty and independence of his conduct procured him many friends.

The first year's subscription has been transmitted to America, to defray the expense of publishing his posthumous works.

In the year 1800 he was chiefly employed in experiments, and writing an account of them for various publications. In

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this year also he published his treatise in defence of Phlogiston, he revised his "Church History," the two first volumes of which are now reprinted with considerable additions, and he added to and improved his "Notes on the Scriptures."

He spent some time in the spring of 1801 in Philadelphia; during his stay there he had a violent attack of fever, which weakened him exceedingly, and from the effects of which he never perfectly recovered. Added to this the fever and ague prevailed at Northumberland and the neighbourhood, for the first time since his settlement at the place. He had two or three attacks of this disorder, which, though they were not very severe, as he had never more than three fits at a time, retarded his recovery very much. He perceived the effect of his illness in the diminution of his strength, and his not being able to take as much exercise as he used to do. His spirits, however, were good, and he was very assiduous in making experiments, chiefly on the pile of Volta, the result of which he sent an account of to "Nicholson's Journal," and the "Medical Repository."

In 1802 he began to print his "Church History," in consequence of the subscription raised by his friends in England, as before stated. Besides printing three volumes of that work, he wrote and printed "A Treatise on Baptism," chiefly in answer to the observations of Mr. Robinson on the subject. He likewise made some experiments, and replied to some remarks of Mr. Cruikshank, in defence of the anti-phlogistic theory.

I am now to describe the last scene of his life, which deserves the reader's most serious consideration, as it shows the powerful effect of his religious principles. They made him, not resigned to quit a world in which he no longer had any delight, and in which no hope of future enjoyment

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presented itself, but cheerful in the certainty of approaching dissolution, and under circumstances that would, by the world in general, have been considered as highly enviable. They led him to consider death as the labourer does sleep at night, as being necessary to renew his mental and corporeal powers, and fit him for a future state of activity and happiness. For though since his illness in Philadelphia, in 1801, he had never recovered his former good state of health, yet he had never been confined to his bed a whole day by sickness in America, until within two days of his death, and was never incapacitated for any pursuit that he had been accustomed to. He took great delight in his garden, and in viewing the little improvements going forward in and about the town. The rapidly increasing prosperity of the country, whether as it regarded its agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, or the increasing taste for science and literature, were all of them to him a source of the purest pleasure. For the last four years of his life he lived under an administration the principles and practice of which he perfectly approved, and with Mr. Jefferson, the head of that administration, he frequently corresponded, and they had for each other a mutual regard and esteem. He enjoyed the esteem of the wisest and best men in the country, particularly at Philadelphia, where his religion and his politics did not prevent his being kindly and cheerfully received by great numbers of opposite opinions in both, who thus paid homage to his knowledge and virtue. At home he was beloved; and besides the advantages of an excellent library, to which he was continually making additions, and of a laboratory that was amply provided with everything necessary for an experimental chemist, he was perfectly freed, as he had happily been through life, in consequence of my mother's

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ability and attention, from any attention to worldly concerns; considering himself, as he used to express himself, merely as a lodger, having all his time to devote to his theological and philosophical pursuits. He had the satisfaction of witnessing the gradual spread of his religious opinions, and the fullest conviction that he should prevail over his opponents in chemistry. He looked forward with the greatest pleasure to future exertions in both these fields, and had within the last month or six weeks been projecting many improvements in his apparatus, which he meant to make use of upon the return of warm weather in the spring. Notwithstanding, therefore, the many trials he underwent in this country, he had still great sources of happiness left, unalloyed by any apprehension of any material defect in any of his senses, or any abatement of the vigour of his mind. Consistent with the above was his declaration that, excepting the want of the society of Mr. Lindsey, Mr. Belsham, and two or three other particular friends—which, however, was made up to him, in some, though in a small degree, by their regular correspondence—he had never upon the whole spent any part of his life more happily, nor, he believed, more usefully.

The first part of his illness, independent of his general weakness, the result of his illness in Philadelphia, in 1801, was a constant indigestion, and a difficulty of swallowing meat or any kind of solid food, unless previously reduced by mastication to a perfect pulp. This gradually increased upon him till he could swallow liquids but very slowly, and led him to suspect, which he did to the last, that there must be some stoppage in the œsophagus. Lately he lived almost entirely upon tea, chocolate, soups, sago, custard puddings, and the like. During all this time of general and increasing debility, he was busily employed in printing his "Church

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History," and the first volume of the "Notes on Scripture"; and in making new and original experiments, an account of which he sent to the American Philosophical Society, in two numbers, one in answer to Dr. Darwin's "Observations on Spontaneous Generation," and the other "On the Unexpected Conversion of a Quantity of the Marine Acid into the Nitrous." During this period, likewise, he wrote his pamphlet of "Jesus and Socrates Compared," and reprinted his "Essay on Phlogiston." He would not suffer anyone to do for him what he had been accustomed to do himself; nor did he alter his former mode of life in any respect, excepting that he no longer worked in his garden, and that he read more books of a miscellaneous nature than he had been used to do when he could work more in his laboratory, which had always served him as a relaxation from his other studies.

From about the beginning of November 1803, to the middle of January 1804, his complaint grew more serious. He was once incapable of swallowing anything for nearly thirty hours; and there being some symptoms of inflammation at his stomach, blisters were applied, which afforded him relief; and by very great attention to his diet, riding out in a chair when the weather would permit, and living chiefly on the soft parts of oysters, he seemed, if not gaining ground, at least not getting worse; and we had reason to hope, that if he held out until spring as he was, the same attention to his diet with more exercise, which was impossible for him to take on account of the cold weather, would restore him to health. He, however, considered his life as very precarious, and used to tell the physician who attended him, that if he could but patch him up for six months longer, he should be perfectly satisfied, as he should in that time be able to complete printing his works. The swelling of his feet, an

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alarming symptom of general debility, began about this time.

To give some idea of the exertions he made even at this time, it is only necessary for me to say, that besides his miscellaneous reading, which was at all times very great, he read through all the works quoted in his Comparison of the different systems of the Grecian philosophers with Christianity, composed that work, and transcribed the whole of it in less than three months. He took the precaution of transcribing one day in long hand, what he had composed the day before in shorthand, that he might by that means leave the work complete as far as it went, should he not live to complete the whole. During this period he composed in a day his second reply to Dr. Linn.

About this time he ceased performing divine service, which he said he had never before known himself incapable of performing, notwithstanding he had been a preacher so many years. He likewise now suffered me to rake his fire, rub his feet with a flesh-brush, and occasionally help him to bed. In the morning likewise he had his fire made for him, which he always used to do himself, and generally before any of the family was stirring.

In the last fortnight in January he was troubled with alarming fits of indigestion; his legs swelled nearly to his knees, and his weakness increased very much. I wrote for him, while he dictated, the concluding section of his "New Comparison," and the Preface and Dedication. The finishing this work was a source of great satisfaction to him, as he considered it as a work of as much consequence as any he had ever undertaken. The first alarming symptom of approaching dissolution was his being unable to speak to me upon my entering his room on Tuesday morning, the 31st of January.

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In his diary I find he stated his situation as follows: "Ill all day—not able to speak for nearly three hours." When he was able to speak, he told me he had slept well—as he uniformly had done through the whole of his illness; so that he never would suffer me, though I frequently requested he would do it, to sleep in the same room with him—that he felt as well as possible; that he got up and shaved himself (which he never omitted doing every morning till within two days of his death); that he went to his laboratory, and then found his weakness very great; that he got back with difficulty; that just afterward his grand-daughter, a child of about six or seven years old, came to him to claim the fulfilment of a promise he had made her the evening before, to give her a five-penny bit. He gave her the money, and was going to speak to her, but found himself unable. He informed me of this, speaking very slowly a word at a time, and added that he had never felt more pleasantly in his whole life than he did during the time he was unable to speak. After he had taken his medicine, which was bark and laudanum, and drank a basin of strong mutton broth, he recovered surprisingly, and talked with cheerfulness to all who called upon him, but as though he was fully sensible that he had not long to live. He consented for the first time that I should sleep in the room with him.

On Wednesday, February 1st, he writes: "I was at times much better in the morning: capable of some business: continued better all day." He spoke this morning as strong as usual, and took in the course of the day a good deal of nourishment with pleasure. He said that he felt a return of strength, and with it there was a duty to perform. He read a good deal in "Newcome's Translation of the New Testament," and "Stevens's History of the War." In the afternoon he

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gave me some directions how to proceed with printing his work in case he should die. He gave me directions to stop the printing of the second volume, and to begin upon the third, that he might see how it was begun, and that it might serve as a pattern to me to proceed by.

On Thursday, the 2nd, he wrote thus for the last time in his diary: "Much worse: incapable of business: Mr. Kennedy came to receive instructions about printing, in case of my death." He sat up, however, a great part of the day, was cheerful, and gave Mr. Cooper and myself some directions with the same composure as though he had only been about to leave home for a short time. Though it was fatiguing to him to talk, he read a good deal in the works above mentioned.

On Friday he was much better. He sat up a good part of the day reading "Newcome," Dr. Disney's "Translation of the Psalms," and some chapters in the "Greek Testament," which was his daily practice. He corrected a proof-sheet of the "Notes on Isaiah." When he went to bed he was not so well; he had an idea he should not live another day. At prayer-time he wished to have the children kneel by his bedside, saying it gave him great pleasure to see the little things kneel; and, thinking he possibly might not see them again, he gave them his blessing.

On Saturday, the 4th, my father got up for about an hour while his bed was made. He said he felt more comfortable in bed than up. He read a good deal, and looked over the first sheet of the third volume of the "Notes," that he might see how we were likely to go on with it; and having examined the Greek and Hebrew quotations, and finding them right, he said he was satisfied we should finish the work very well. In the course of the day he expressed his gratitude in

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being permitted to die quietly in his family, without pain, with every convenience and comfort he could wish for. He dwelt upon the peculiarly happy situation in which it had pleased the Divine Being to place him in life; and the great advantage he had enjoyed in the acquaintance and friendship of some of the best and wisest men in the age in which he lived, and the satisfaction he derived from having led a useful as well as a happy life.

On Sunday he was much weaker, and only sat up in an arm-chair while his bed was made. He desired me to read to him the eleventh chapter of John. I was going on to read to the end of the chapter, but he stopped me at the forty-fifth verse. He dwelt for some time on the advantage he had derived from reading the Scriptures daily, and advised me to do the same, saying that it would prove to me, as it had done to him, a source of the purest pleasure. He desired me to reach him a pamphlet which was at his bed's head, "Simpson on the Duration of Future Punishment." "It will be a source of satisfaction to you to read that pamphlet," said he, giving it to me; "it contains my sentiments, and a belief in them will be a support to you in the most trying circumstances, as it has been to me. We shall all meet finally: we only require different degrees of discipline, suited to our different tempers, to prepare us for final happiness." Upon Mr. —— coming into his room he said, "You see, sir, I am still living." Mr. —— observed he would always live. "Yes," said he, "I believe I shall, and we shall all meet again in another and a better world." He said this with great animation, laying hold on Mr. ——'s hand in both his.

Before prayers he desired me to reach him three publications, about which he would give me some directions next morning. His weakness would not permit him to do it at that time.

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At prayers he had all the children brought to his bedside as before. After prayers they wished him a good night, and were leaving the room. He desired them to stay, spoke to them each separately. He exhorted them all to continue to love each other. "And you, little thing," speaking to Eliza, "remember the hymn you learned, 'Birds in their little nests agree,' &c.; I am going to sleep as well as you: for death is only a good sound sleep in the grave, and we shall meet again." He congratulated us on the dispositions of our children; said it was a satisfaction to see them likely to turn out well; and continued for some time to express his confidence in a happy immortality, and in a future state which would afford us an ample field for the exertion of our faculties.

On Monday morning, the 6th of February, after having lain perfectly still till four o'clock in the morning, he called to me, but in a fainter tone than usual, to give him some wine and tincture of bark. I asked him how he felt. He answered, he had no pain, but appeared fainting away gradually. About an hour after, he asked me for some chicken-broth, of which he took a tea-cup full. His pulse was quick, weak, and fluttering, his breathing, though easy, short. About eight o'clock he asked me to give him some egg and wine. After this he lay quite still till ten o'clock, when he desired me and Mr. Cooper to bring him the pamphlets we had looked out the evening before. He then dictated as clearly and distinctly as he had ever done in his life, the additions and alterations he wished to have made in each. Mr. Cooper took down the substance of what he said, which, when he had done, I read to him. He said Mr. Cooper had put it in his own language; he wished it to be put in his. I then took a pen

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and ink to his bedside. He then repeated over again, nearly word for word, what he had before said; and when I had done, I read it over to him. He said, "That is right, I have now done." About half an hour after he desired, in a faint voice, that we would move him from the bed on which he lay to a cot, that he might lie with his lower limbs horizontal, and his head upright. He died in about ten minutes after we had moved him, but breathed his last so easy, that neither myself or my wife, who were both sitting close to him, perceived it at the time. He had put his hand to his face, which prevented our observing it.

The above account, which conveys but a very inadequate idea of the composure and cheerfulness of his last moments, deserves the attention of unbelievers in general, particularly of philosophical unbelievers. They have known him to be zealous and active in the pursuit of philosophical truths, and to be ever ready to acknowledge any mistakes he may have fallen into. By the perusal of these Memoirs, they have found that he gradually, and after much thought and reflection, abandoned all those opinions which disgrace what is usually called Christianity in the eyes of rational men, and whose inconsistency with reason and common sense has most probably been the cause of their infidelity, and of their total inattention to the evidences of Christianity. These opinions he abandoned because he could not find them supported either in the Scriptures, or in the genuine writings of the early Christians. They must be sensible that the same desire for truth, and the same fearless spirit of enquiry, and the same courage in the open avowal of the most obnoxious tenets, would have led him to have discarded religion altogether, had he seen reason so to do; and there is little doubt but that he would have been subject to less obloquy by so doing, than

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by exposing the various corruptions of Christianity in the manner he did. They have seen, however, that in proportion as he attended to the subject, his faith in Christianity increased, and produced that happy disposition of mind described in these Memoirs. The subject is therefore well deserving of their attention, and they should be induced from so fair an example, and the weight due to my father's opinions, to make themselves fully acquainted with the arguments in favour of Christianity, before they reject it as an idle fable.

Many unbelievers have, no doubt, borne with great patience severe calamities; they have suffered death with great fortitude, when engaged in a good cause, and many have courted death to serve their friends or their country. It must, however, be allowed that there is no great merit in meeting death with fortitude when it cannot be avoided, and likewise that the above cases cannot be absolutely calculated upon, as there is no sufficient motive to account for their conduct. But upon a truly practical Christian there is the greatest dependence to be placed, for acting well in all the situations in which he may be found; his highest interest being connected with the performance of the greatest duties; and even supposing that many persons, who are not Christians, from favourable circumstances, attendant upon their birth and education, and from a naturally happy temperament of body and mind, may, and it must be allowed do acquire a habit of disinterested benevolence, and may in general be depended upon to act uniformly well in life, still the Christian has a decided advantage over them in the hour of death, as to consider death as necessary to his entering upon a new and enlarged sphere of activity and enjoyment is a privilege that belongs to him alone.

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A

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